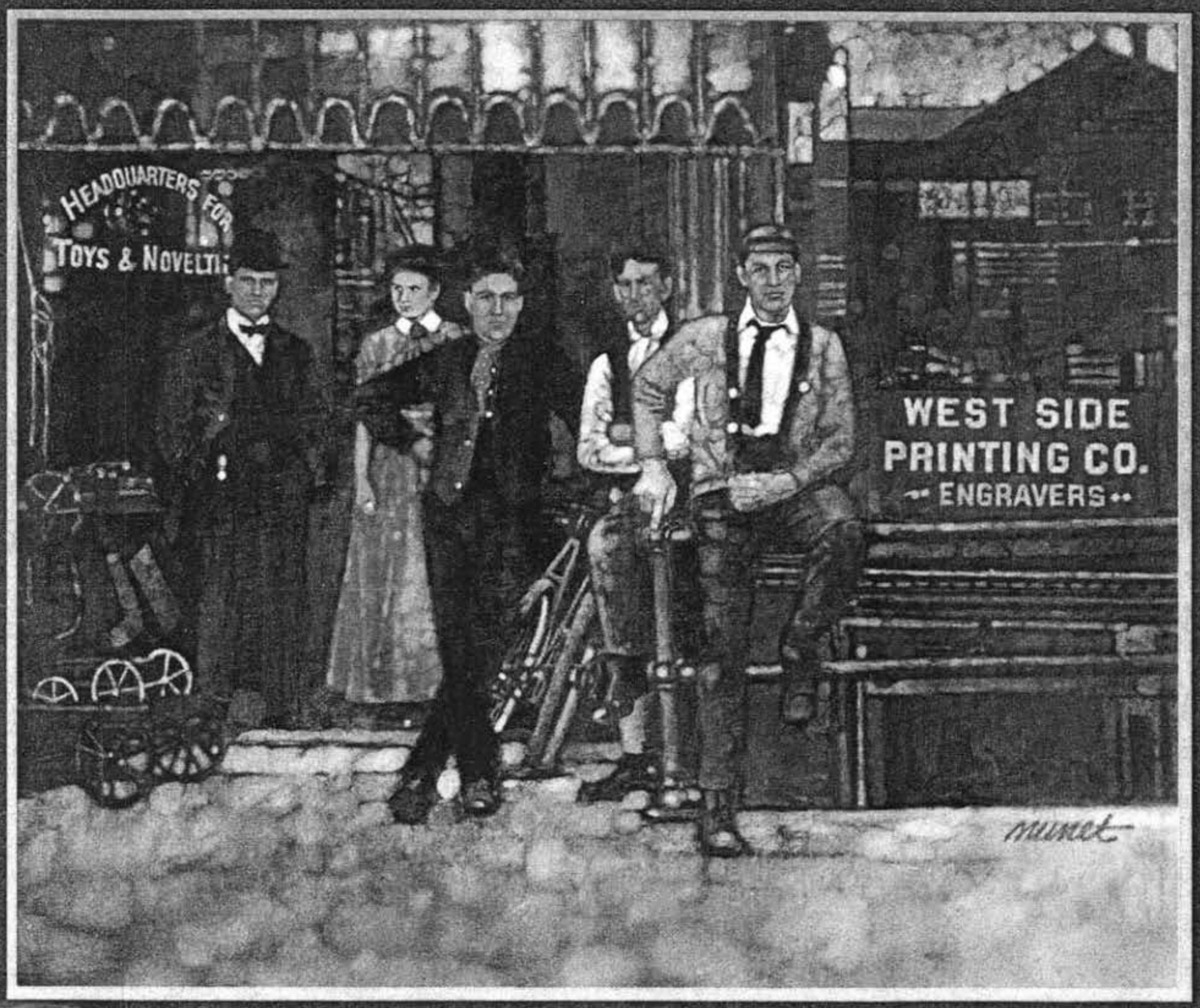
THE WESTERNER



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COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE

Dear Employees and Friends of Western:

Most milestones are reached one at a time. But in 1982, Western has reached two milestones in its history: one marks the 75th anniversary of our company; the other commemorates the 40th birthday of Golden Books.

We welcome the opportunity to reflect on these milestones in this, our Commemorative Issue of *The Westerner*. In so doing, we can share and celebrate this point in our development with our employees, retirees, customers, licensors, suppliers, friends and associates who have helped to make these occasions possible.

It is not at all coincidental that Western should celebrate its printing and publishing milestones side-by-side for, through the years, our company has combined each in an impressive number of ways, both for our consumer customers who use our published materials, and for our commercial customers who turn to us for creative and printing expertise.

Indeed, our commitment to please these customers has inspired Western to produce a variety of products to suit almost any purpose. From postage stamps to poster billboards. On paper, cardboard, plastic, cloth and other printable surfaces. And, in every conceivable format. Books of every size and shape. Magazines, pamphlets, brochures. Annual reports, catalogs, newspaper inserts. Puzzles, games, playing cards. Educational kits, wipe-off boards, encyclopedias. Activity products with a wide range of printing surfaces and purposes.

The list, as you know, could go on.

Importantly, as Westerners have produced these materials, a contagious pride has been demonstrated in their work, not only in maintaining uniform quality during manufacture, but also in the end result, which must be customer satisfaction. That sense of pride is necessary in everything we do, for we communicate with people of all ages and in all stages of life. Babies. Preschoolers. Grade school children. Teenagers and young adults. Parents. Senior citizens. Single people and married couples.

We entertain, inform, inspire. We educate and advertise. And many of our products encourage an active participation that not only keeps children happy, but that also brings families closer together.

Our products reach people in many different locales. In modest homes and luxurious ones, throughout our country and in more than 50 foreign countries where our products are sold.

All of this success in printed and published communication is possible because of the cooperative spirit at Western. Internally, our products call upon the expertise of many different people with a combination of talents. Authors, editors, artists, designers. Photographers, illustrators. Typographers and keyliners. Cameramen and production people. Pressmen and bookbinders. Quality control experts. Marketing groups, sales personnel and many others who help to process, produce and deliver our products.

Externally, that same cooperative spirit has been evident in the many agreements we have made with our licensors, and in the sales we have made to our customers.

It's probably safe to say that Western has joined hands in cooperative printing and publishing ventures with more major companies than has any other printer/publisher in the world.

We're proud to have our consumer books, games, puzzles and activity products displayed and sold in over 150,000 book, department and other stores. Our products are sold by major mass merchandisers such as K Mart Corporation; T.G. & Y Stores, Inc.; Target Stores; F.W. Woolworth Co.; Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.; J.C. Penney Co.; Sears, Roebuck & Co.; Ben Franklin; Zayre; G.C. Murphy Co.; Rac Rite; Sprouse-Reitz, Inc.; Caldor, Inc.; Winn's Stores, Inc.; and Montgomery Ward Co. By toy store chains with names like Toys 'R' Us and Child World. By prime bookstore chains: B. Dalton Booksellers and Waldenbook. By supermarket chains that include Safeway Stores, Inc. and Kroger Co. By drug chains such as Walgreen Drug; Revco Drug; Osco Drug; and Thrift Drug. And through wholesalers that include Northern Specialty; The Berton Co.; Ingram Book; Charles Levy Circulating Co.; and Blatt Distributing.

At the same time, we have produced materials for a long list of major corporations: Dell Publishing Company, Inc.; General Drafting Company, Inc.; Scholastic Magazines, Inc.; 13-30 Corporation; S.C. Johnson & Son Inc.; Hershey Foods Corporation; Packaging Corporation of America; Walt Disney Music Company, Walt Disney World Company, Disneyland Incorporated and Disney EPCOT Center; Chrysler Corporation; Maytag Company; Ralston Purina Company; McDonald's Corporation; Avon Products; Burger Chef Systems; Campbell Soup Company; Carnation Company; CBS Publications; Current, Inc.; Determined Productions, Inc.; Doubleday & Company, Inc.; Gaylords; J.M. Smucker Company; Kraft, Inc.; The Play Cable Company; Rival Manufacturing Company; State Farm Insurance; Superscope, Incorporated; Volvo of America Corporation; and Mattel, Inc., our parent company.

We are likewise pleased and feel honored to have printed books, magazines and other products featuring an exciting array of both real and animated characters who are integral parts of America's popular culture. Our "famous folks" list includes film and stage celebrities such as Gene Autry, Doris Day, Bob Hope, Eddie Albert and Jane Powell; sports stars like Jim Plunkett and Ron Jaworski; and characters such as Mickey Mouse, Bugs Bunny, Barbie, Big Bird and Woody Woodpecker.

Through the years, we have enjoyed fine and long-term associations with licensors of some of these characters and others. Western's relationship with Walt Disney, for example, spans 50 years. We have licensed Walter Lantz's Woody Woodpecker for 40 years. We have featured Looney Tunes characters licensed by Warner Bros. since 1944, and we have licensed Barbie and other Mattel, Inc., characters since 1963. Beginning in 1971, we were one of the first licensees to work with Children's Television Workshop, producers of *Sesame Street*.

Evidence of the cooperative spirit with both Western's employees and associates is obvious throughout *The Westerner* stories that tell of the success of Western Publishing Company for 75 years and the success of Golden Books for 40 years.

The success of Western and Golden are interesting to reflect upon. But, Western's and Golden's future potentials are of prime interest to me. As a relative newcomer, I look forward to being a part of Western's future as it approaches new milestones.

Best regards,

J. A. Marino

J.A. Marino
President and
Chief Executive Officer

THE WESTERNER

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Western Publish c. 2
The Westerner commemorative issue, W M
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This special Commemorative Issue is published for employees, friends and associates of Western Publishing Company, Inc. Vol. 3, No. 2, Winter 1982

Cover

Western Publishing Company traces its beginnings back 75 years ago to 1907, when Edward H. Wadewitz purchased the West Side Printing Co. In 1908, the company moved to a second location (left), where it occupied the first floor and basement in a building at 548 State Street in Racine, Wisconsin.

The artwork for the cover is an oil painting done especially for this Commemorative Issue by Western artist, Roger Nunet. It is based on a black and white photograph taken about 1909. Most notable in the painting is William R. Wadewitz (seated on the railing), who later became a Western president and chief executive officer.

"Diversity": A Key to the Strength and Success of Western Publishing Company During 75 Years of Printing and Publishing

2

The story of Western from 1907 through 1982 is filled with exciting highlights about the company's founders, principal activities, products and major locations. Though space is not available to mention every person who contributed to the company's growth, it is obvious that the most important highlight in the Western story has always been the company's foundation of hardworking, talented employees.

Golden Books: A Much-Loved Tradition for Millions of Families for 40 Years

18

It's no surprise that the Golden Book name is one of the most recognized names in the publishing business. Ever since Golden Books were introduced in 1942 with Poky Little Puppy and other charming Little Golden Book characters, the Golden list has grown. . . consistently and carefully. Through the years, the Golden name has appeared on a tremendous number and variety of books that appeal to a large, loyal audience of Golden Book readers.

In the true tradition of Western Publishing Company, Inc., this issue of The Westerner *has been produced by Western.*

The History of Western and the Golden Book story:
RESEARCHED AND WRITTEN by Jeff Sass, Editor, Corporate Communications
EDITORIAL SUPERVISION by Dick Konsinowski, Director, Corporate Communications

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EDITOR, Cecily R. Hogan, Senior Editor, Creative Services

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ART PRODUCTION AND KEYLINE, Reiny Dykstra, Production Manager, Creative Services
TYPOGRAPHY, Carolyn Kieffer, Typographer, Creative Services
PHOTOGRAPHY OF PRODUCTS, Sark Buchaklian, Photographer, Creative Services
ARCHIVE ASSISTANCE, Jalaine Tennessen, Copyright Administrator and Librarian, Rights and Royalties

The production of this magazine also required the expertise of Westerners in the following departments:

ESTIMATING
CUSTOMER SERVICE
PAPER PURCHASING
PRODUCTION AND INVENTORY CONTROL
CAMERA
STRIPPING
PLATEMAKING
INK ROOM
SHEETFED PRESSROOM
QUALITY CONTROL
FLAT CUTTING
FOLDING
SOFTCOVER BINDERY
MAIL ROOM

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RACINE PUBLIC LIBRARY

"Diversity" A Key to the Strength and Success of Western Publishing Company During 75 Years of Printing and Publishing

Diversity is a favorite term in the business world of the 1980's. It highlights a now proven fact that a company can't succeed if it concentrates all of its efforts on just a few products. In essence, it's the modern way to say, "You can't put all your eggs in one basket."

At Western Publishing Company, Inc., diversity has been the corporate style since the company's humble beginnings in 1907. Diversity in the types of products sold by Western. Diversity in the talents of Western's many people who have produced, marketed and delivered those products. Diversity in the number of offices, plants, equipment and other facilities. And, certainly, diversity in the varied business relationships that Western has enjoyed with customers, licensors, subsidiary companies, suppliers and other important associates.

Diversity. It's an unnamed yet obvious thread that is woven throughout the impressive story of how a small two-press printing operation grew into a multi-million dollar publishing giant.

During the 1800's, the word "west" became synonymous with unrestrained growth and prosperity. It was a lively term conjuring to mind images of a land rich in challenge, abundant in opportunity. "Go West, Young Man" is a familiar American folklore phrase rooted in this era. It seemed to prophesy a different way to seek one's fortune. . .a promising frontier for anyone who was willing to pull up stakes, settle in unfamiliar territory and start anew.

By sheer coincidence, the brave ways of the old west appropriately characterize the early development of Western Publishing Company. For, just as those first pioneers were weighted by the strain of uncertainty, so, too, was Edward Henry (E.H.) Wadewitz when he purchased the West Side Printing Company.

Western's business started in 1907 in this basement print shop. "Pioneer employees" were (from the left) Roy A. Spencer, Catherine Bongarts Rutledge, E.H. Wadewitz, W.R. Wadewitz and William Bell. The shop consisted of not much more than two battered presses, a few fonts of worn type and a hand-powered cutting machine.

E.H. Wadewitz (1910)

Roy A. Spencer (1910)

1907

Ignoring the warnings of others, E.H. (with financial help from a brother, Al) bought all stock and goodwill of the financially troubled West Side Printing Company for $2,504.

Neither E.H. or Al knew the first thing about printing when they purchased the small print shop in the fall of 1907, and that's probably why local printers waged bets on how long the "new kid" would stay in business. But E.H. had always wanted his own business, and he somehow convinced his brother that—with proper management—the shop could turn a profit.

One proof of E.H.'s "proper management" came soon: He was an intelligent but modest man who fully recognized the shop's need for a top-notch person familiar with the technical aspects of printing. That individual was Roy A. Spencer, a young, yet experienced journeyman printer who had a secure job at the *Racine Journal* newspaper.

E.H. lured Roy to West Side in 1908. Together, the two young men cofounded and developed the small firm.

West Side did only $5,000 in sales its first full year, but even that small amount yielded a respectable profit because of the young company's sound management philosophy and principles. From its start, the shop quickly earned a reputation of integrity and reliability.

E.H. had always been a believer in true and fair prices, and he didn't concur with the then current slipshod practice of "guessing at costs." One of the first things he did was to derive accurate figures for all operations and overhead in order to implement a cost system that would truly reflect the price of a job. He was extremely tactful and sincere in his dealings, but he refused to cut prices or run jobs at a loss. He relied on quality, service and dependability to justify his bottom line.

These practices furthered the new company's reputation as a dependable source of supply to local Racine customers such as S.C. Johnson & Son, Inc. (Johnson Wax) and the J.I. Case Company.

Soon, West Side showed signs of growth. In 1908, the young company moved to more spacious quarters, added several new employees and installed an automatic power cutter, a cylinder press and two smaller presses.

213-227 STATE ST.
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WESTERN PRINTING & LITHOGRAPHING CO.

1910

Within just three years, annual sales reached $19,000. The firm incorporated, with a capital stock of $75,000, and also took on a new name: Western Printing & Lithographing Co.

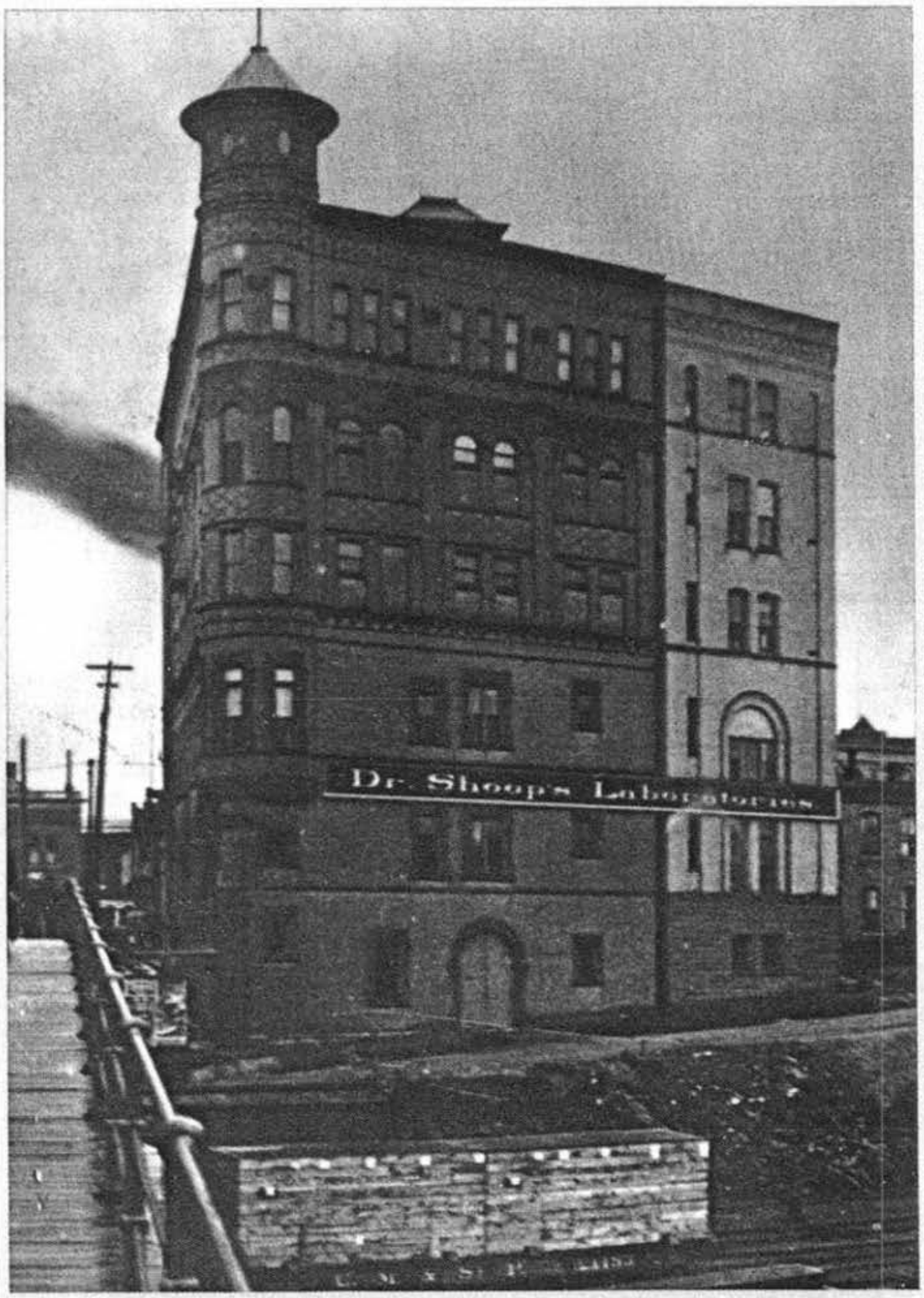
The new name reflected the purchase of Western's first lithographic offset press—a 19″ × 26″ model used for both black and white and color printing.

In 1910, Roy was elected president, ran the presses and managed the production facilities. E.H. was secretary-treasurer, did the estimating, sold the printing, kept the costs and maintained the books. A new partner, C.H. Van Vliet, was elected vice president. And Elmer Voight was hired as the company's first bindery employee.

Western again pulled up stakes, this time renting half the basement and minimal first floor office space in the Shoop Building occupied by the famous Dr. Charles Shoop, who sold tonics, pills and medications.

By 1914, when Dr. Shoop retired, Western arranged occupancy of the entire six floors with an annual rent of $6,000. Sales topped $127,000 that year. And the company added electrotyping and engraving departments and installed a larger, 28″ × 42″ offset press.

Although the company had humble beginnings, it soon adopted rather ornate elements that visually elevated its stature in the community. One major change in 1910 was the stationery letterhead that displayed the company's name-change to Western Printing & Lithographing Co. (top of page). The other change was the move to the imposing building owned by Dr. Shoop's Laboratories (right). In time, as Dr. Shoop's business declined, Western's business increased. Eventually, Western occupied the entire structure.



1915

E.H.'s challenge of a sour-episode-turned-sweet changed the course of business.

By the year 1915, Western's ever-expanding customer list included names such as Western Coil & Electric, Belle City Incubator, Hamilton Beach Manufacturing, Hartman Trunk, Waukegan Lime, Massey-Harris and Mitchell Motors.

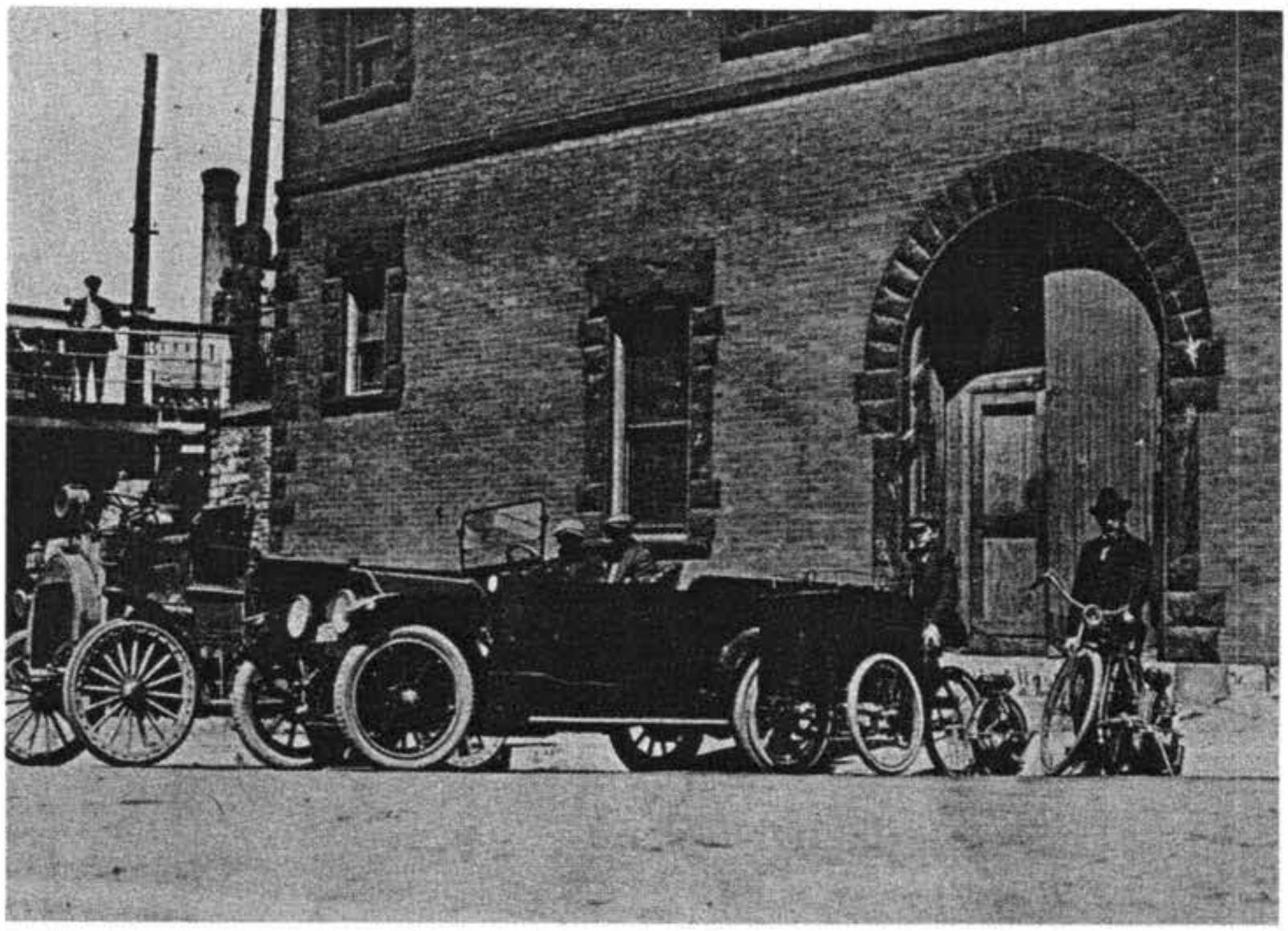
Nonetheless, the overall business picture was far from perfect. Western was learning that the larger the volume of commercial jobs, the harder it was to keep a steady flow of work going through the shop. There were periods when no supplementary work was available to fill press time between commercial jobs.

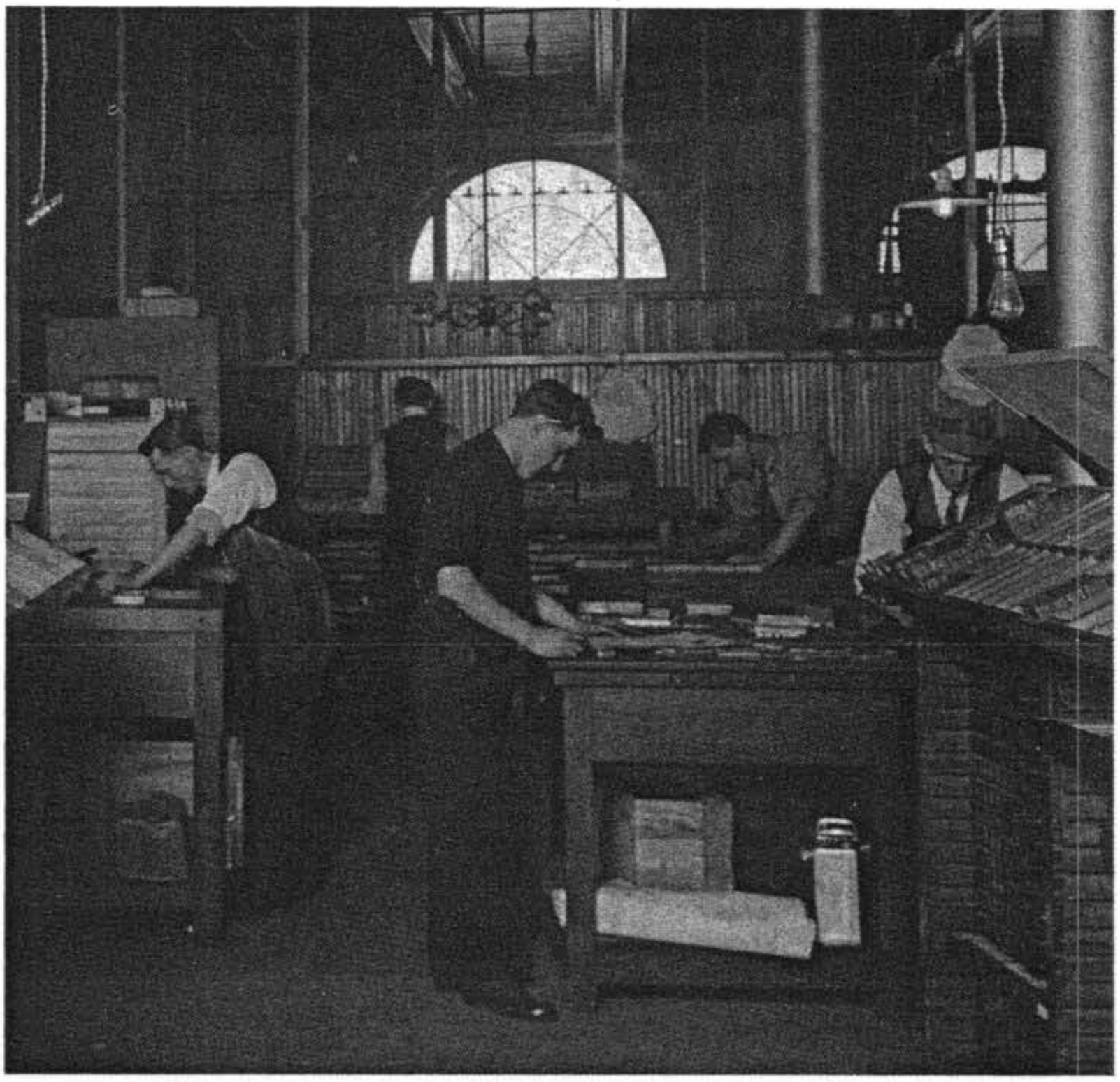
To solve this problem, Western entered into a 1915 agreement to print books for the Hamming-Whitman Publishing Company, a Chicago publishing house whose primary business was the sale of children's books to variety, book and department stores.

Several months after Western began printing for the publisher, however, Hamming-Whitman was forced to default on its bills. Western had thousands of books sitting in storage (and umpteen more in process) for which it would not be paid. So E.H. took it upon himself to liquidate the inventory. . .even though he was unfamiliar with the buyers and channels of purchase in the retail trade. He sold all of the books and recovered the money Western expended for their manufacture.

Thus, Western not only had presses and binders to produce children's books: E.H. now also had some experience in selling them. Consequently, on February 9, 1916, Western acquired all assets of Hamming-Whitman and, at the first meeting of its stockholders (all five of them), established the new firm as Whitman Publishing Company, a subsidiary corporation engaged in children's book creation and distribution. With a sales force of two, first year receipts from book sales approached $43,500.

Also in 1916, Sam Lowe joined Whitman. Lowe served both as an energetic salesman and as one of the most creative minds Whitman had during its early days.





Soon, the company's transportation and employee capabilities grew. In 1915, Western's "fleet" (above), parked in front of the Shoop building, included the company's two original vehicles: a bicycle that "salesman" E.H. rode around town and a two-wheel delivery cart. Inside the building (below) were signs of printing activity.

1918

A landmark mistake in processing a book order to S.S. Kresge Company set the stage for another new direction the company would take with children's books.

One day in 1918, Western received its first book order from the retail chain field. But the Kresge order was misread. Someone confused dozens with gross quantities, and 12 times the correct number of books were produced!

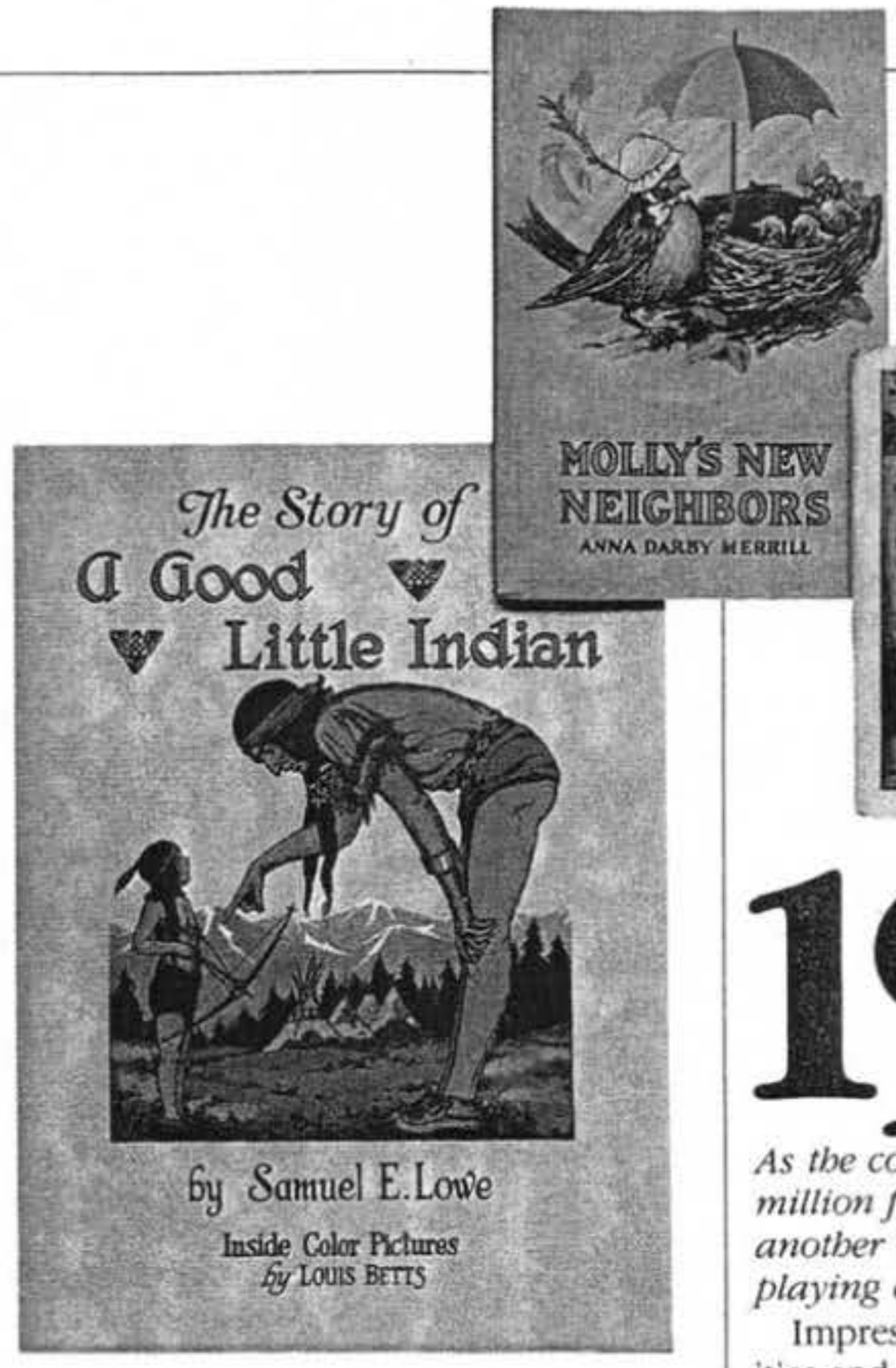
Sam Lowe stepped in and persuaded F.W. Woolworth Company and other chains to experiment with the books by placing them on display year-round. In so doing, Western—and its important new chain customers—discovered a perpetual demand for books which, until that time, had been mostly sold with toys as seasonal Christmas items.

Obviously, Western sold its overstock.

Capitalizing on this auspicious turn of events, Lowe convinced his Western and Whitman associates to start a new ten-cent book line. Immediate success of this low-priced assortment prompted Western to establish a separate Whitman book department.

Lowe's talents were obvious in the creative area as well. Earlier, he had been a social worker in charge of a children's welfare agency. From his experiences, he had tried writing children's stories, which he had submitted to E.H. Lowe subsequently authored many children's books, including some of the first books for girls that he wrote under female pseudonyms.

Later in 1918, with the book business taking shape, Western found it necessary to again look for more space. The Shoop Building was still serving as "headquarters" and now Western also bought a $24,000 facility nearby—known as "Plant 2"—to be used for bookbinding and storage.



Early book publishing efforts included a wide variety of formats (above). Up until 1918, Western continued to produce and sell the original book line it had inherited from Whitman. Most of the books were higher priced books (printed in small runs) that were sold to book and department stores. Sales to chain stores were soon to enter the profit picture. In 1925, Western took on the challenge to manufacture playing cards (lower right).

1923

When Western added a box department, it grew almost overnight when it simultaneously introduced boxed games and jigsaw puzzles.

Though the bread and butter of Western's business had earlier been derived from commercial printing, Western's entry into the game and puzzle lines was proof of its ever-growing success in selling directly to consumers.

(Five years later, Western bought the Broecker Box Company, and Chris and Herman Broecker joined the firm.)

At this time, Western also purchased its first "big" press—a 38″ × 52″ Potter offset model that Western had been instrumental in developing. It was brought on the scene by the demand for economical handling of 6″ × 9″ books.

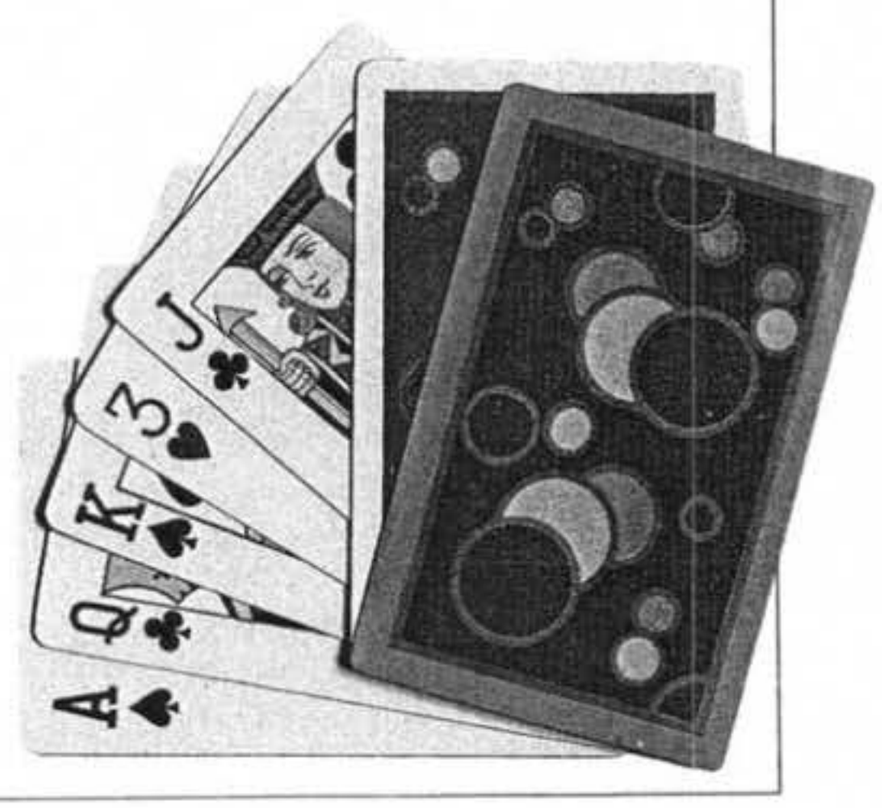
1925

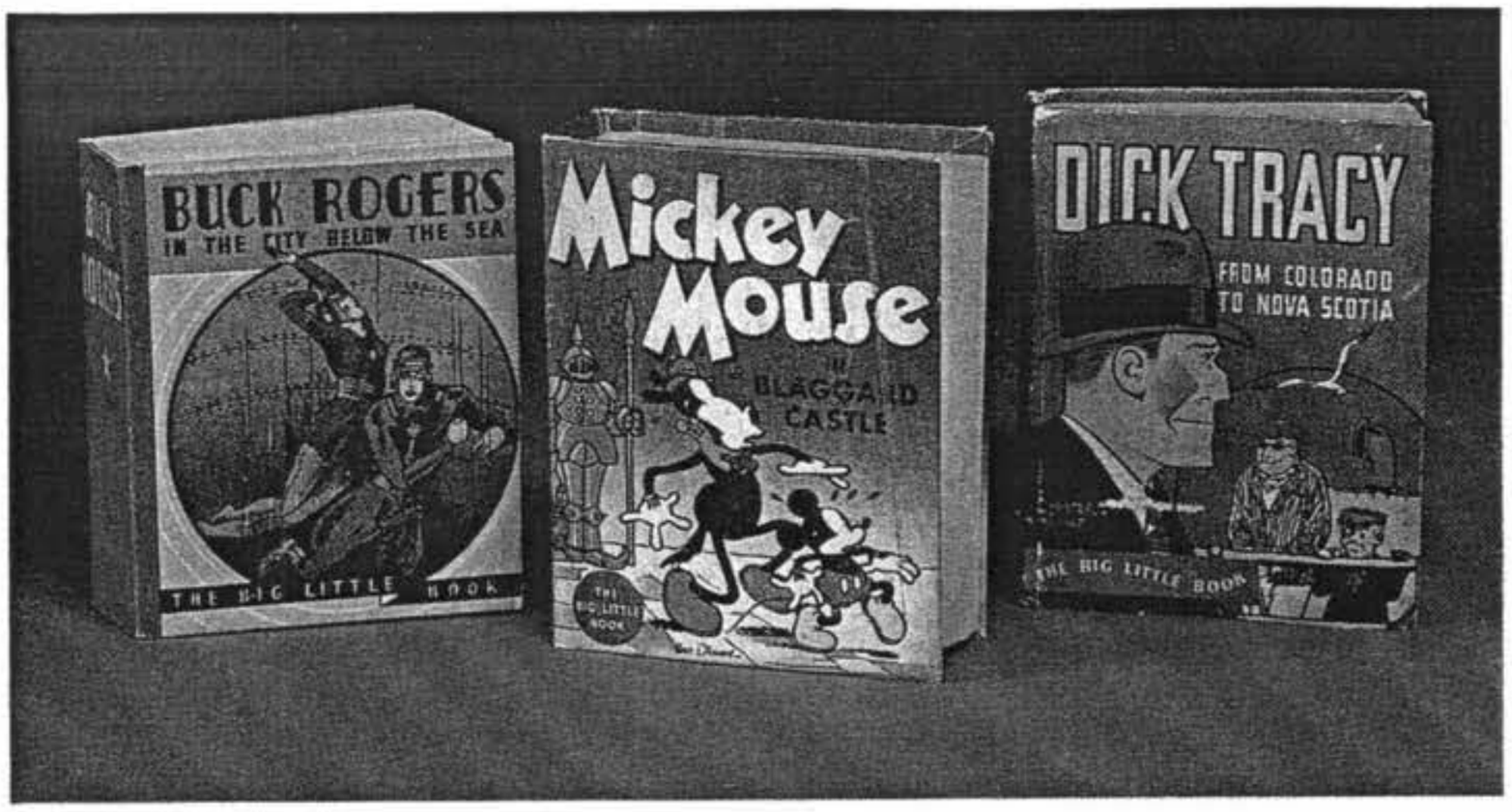
As the company's sales were topping $1-million for the first time, Western entered another new field: the highly competitive playing card market.

Impressed with the production capabilities and quality service of Western, leading chain store customers such as Woolworth's, Kresge and S.H. Kress & Company encouraged Western to accept the challenge to manufacture playing cards. And quite a challenge it was.

Western acquired the Sheffer Playing Card Company, with its president Park Sheffer included in the deal. However, even with Sheffer, Western soon learned that the abnormal printing demand for playing cards included precision quality in register and die-cutting.

At one point, Western was on the verge of abandoning the whole project. But after much trial and error, Western's human ingenuity won out. Specialized equipment was developed and employed. . .and the Western Playing Card Company was established as a subsidiary corporation.





1928

New businesses, storage needs, shipping requirements, manufacturing and other interrelated functions eventually forced the construction of Western's "Main Plant" on Mound Avenue in Racine.

In January of 1928, Western officially moved into its new base of operations. Designed and built exclusively as a graphic arts center, the building was one of the first completely air conditioned, humidity controlled plants of its kind in the country.

Despite reservations on the part of the company's management over whether Western would ever be able to use all of the space in its Mound Avenue home, the Main Plant's new equipment and extra employees helped boost sales to over $2.4-million in 1928. Juvenile book production surpassed 10-million books, playing cards closed in on five-million decks and a million Whitman games and puzzles were produced. . .all by an employee work force of 300 strong.

Later in 1928, Western took its first step towards improving service to out-of-town customers when it opened a small printing plant in Chicago. This seemed to be a logical follow-up to the establishment of a sales office in the Windy City two years earlier. This new plant handled small jobs that Western couldn't previously sell because of the impracticality of producing and shipping to Chicago, 75 miles away from Racine.

Meanwhile, back in Racine, management soon discovered that the company had, in fact, found use for all of its Main Plant space. In 1929, the company mapped plans to add a wing to its Main Plant!

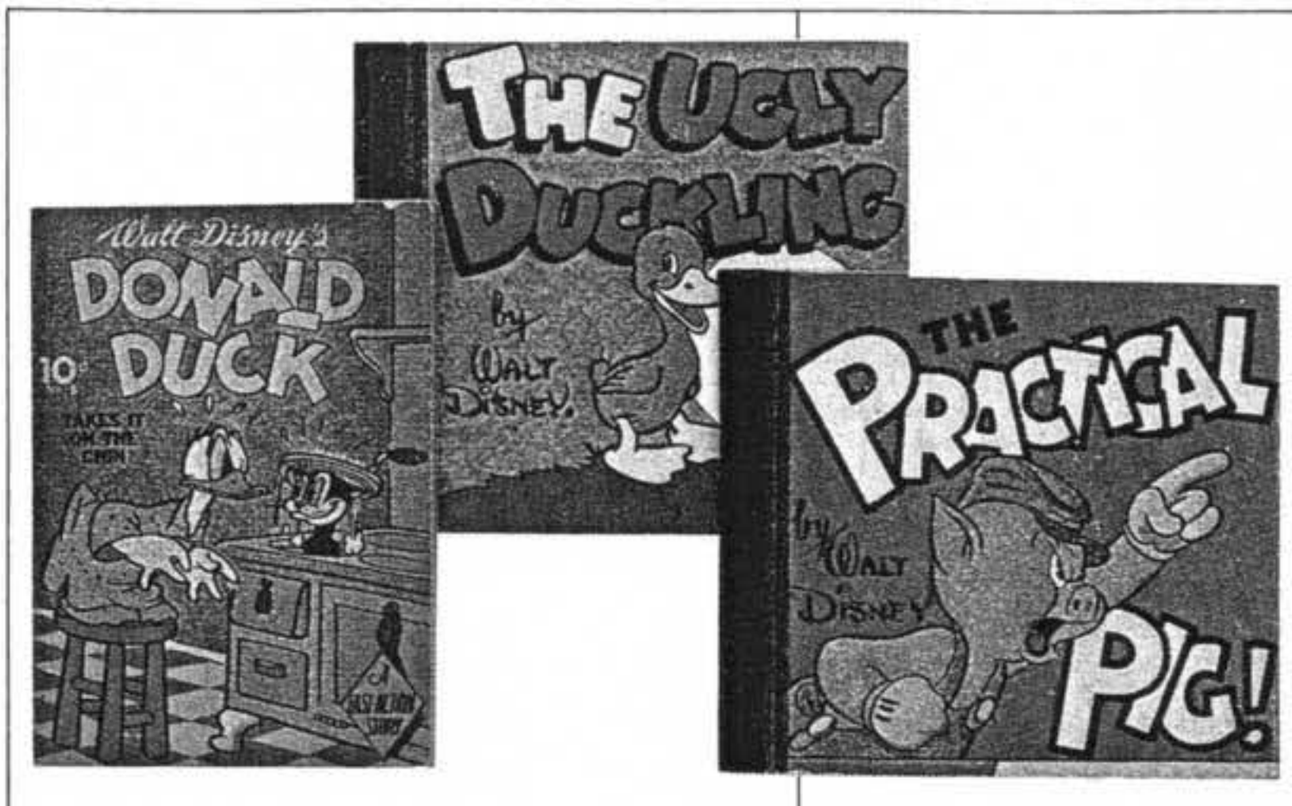
Despite the country's economic weaknesses during the late 1920's and early 1930's, Western continued to show signs of its own strength. One growth factor was the introduction of the Whitman Big Little Book line (above) in 1932. Another major growth sign was the 1929 move to the new Main Plant (middle) in Racine. Still another sign of growth was internal in nature. By 1929, the Western Welfare Association was a solid seven-year organization headed by W.R. Wadewitz (left), who later rose to president and chairman of the board of Western, O.A. Noren (right), Jo Wiechers (lower left) and Margaret Rooney (lower right). The organization provided employees with a range of services, including picnics, parties and "a means of taking care of employees when in sickness, sorrow or distress."

1929

Western entered into another new business with its purchase of the Stationer's Engraving Company, which produced and sold engraved stationery and greeting cards.

The entire Stationer's operation remained for two years in the original Stationer's building in Chicago, but eventually all facets of the business moved to Racine's corporate headquarters.

During the depression years of the early 1930's, Western met success with two significant product lines. One was the Whitman jigsaw puzzle line that soared in popularity. The other was the Whitman Big Little Book line that had its debut with *Adventures of Dick Tracy* in 1932.



1933

In 1933, Western and Walt Disney signed their first contract that gave Western exclusive book rights to all Disney licensed characters.

The agreement between Walt Disney and Western initiated a warm, friendly, long-term relationship between the two companies.

And the Disney contract also set the precedent for many future arrangements between Western and the licensors of hundreds of other popular stars, both animated and "real life." (In time, the use of familiar licensed characters became a popular and successful part of the book business as well as the puzzle, game, comic book and activity product business.)

1934

With the consumer book business now coming into its own, Western again turned its attention to the commercial side of things.

For a number of years, Western had recognized its growth limitations in being strictly a Racine-based printer. Management saw the need to be closer to the publishing industry concentrated in the eastern part of the country.

The solution to the dilemma was the purchase of a large building in Poughkeepsie, New York, an ideal site at that time for an east coast plant some 70 miles from New York City.

Close associations with two major publishers—Dell Publishing Company and Simon and Schuster, Inc. —grew almost from the day the "Pokip" plant opened its doors.

During the early 1930's, Western also opened two Fifth Avenue offices in New York City: one for Whitman sales and display, the other for Western's Newsstand Division, a large part of which was Artists & Writers Guild, Inc., a creative entity that assisted the Dell and Simon and Schuster accounts.

Western became a major preparation and production source for Dell's line of comic books as well as its mystery, romance and adventure paperbacks. Similarly, Western soon evolved into the sole creative and production source for the recently established Juvenile Book Division of Simon and Schuster.

1940

E.H. Wadewitz personally supervised the opening of Western's west coast office, which provided a closer contact with the movie studios that owned rights to the dozens of licensed characters that Western used in so many of its consumer products.

The Beverly Hills, California, office was called the company's Western Division. And it made doing business with Walt Disney, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Film Company, Warner Brothers and several other licensors much easier. Storyline and artwork for books, comics, games and puzzles could be approved the same day by merely traveling cross town instead of cross country.

As soon as the nation entered World War II in the early 1940's, it was not surprising that Western would serve its country by handling much of its wartime printing needs. Western produced over 50-million maps for the armed services. For one service branch alone, it manufactured more than 12-million nonfiction books and novels. It also produced 10-million decks of playing cards used by the Army, Navy and Red Cross. This was in addition to millions of booklets, posters, folders, charts and forms.

Though Western produced so many materials for our country during the war years, most evidence of the company's wartime printing efforts seemed to disappear. What remains as more positive reminders of the 1930's and early 1940's are books and comic books that clearly show how the nation turned to Walt Disney products and other Western-produced light-hearted publications for much-needed joviality. During these years, Western's "fleet" included the unusual Brook Stevens vehicle (above) that was later shipped overseas and stocked with computers that were used to assist the infantry.

In 1941, 53 Charter Members (above) of the Twenty-Year Club of Western Printing & Lithographing Co. posed for a photograph. Included in this group of men and women who had been loyal employees for 20 years or more were Elmer Voight (second row, seated, fifth from the left) and (to his immediate right) Edward H. Wadewitz, Roy A. Spencer and William R. Wadewitz. Two years later, when E.H. addressed the Third Annual Banquet of the Club, he praised the group's efforts during the war. "The war has made a great change in our national life. . . In our plant we are working under government directives that affect paper, zinc, copper and chemicals. Manpower has become a severe problem. . .With all these restrictions, we have by our ingenuity continued to maintain our civilian supply in books, games, greeting and playing cards. In addition we are proud of the part we are playing in the war effort. . ."

1945

With sales exceeding $16-million, and the war drawing to a close, Western purchased its second major outlying plant with the acquisition of Wolff Printing Company, St. Louis.

When Western acquired this plant, it continued the Wolff plant's primary business—that of producing outdoor billboard posters and point-of-purchase displays.

Following the war, life was returning to "normal" at Western. . .and that meant a continuation of new business ventures.

In 1947, Western leased a former Massey-Harris building in Racine and then entered into the manufacture of gift wrap via the aniline and rotogravure printing processes.

In 1945, E.H. again praised Western's Twenty-Year Club members. He explained, "During the war years, our company has acquitted itself in splendid fashion. . .by the production of vital materials, by individual and collective support of the War Bond drives. . .the Community-War Chest and other worthy patriotic movements."

One important effort that was instrumental in the reorientation of post-war veterans was the apprentice and on-the-job training provided through the Western Technical Institute (below) founded at the company's corporate headquarters in 1946. The Institute was established primarily by Elmer Voight. Later, the Institute offered a variety of classes that touched almost all job classifications. In later years, the Institute started its Orientation in Graphic Arts, *a one-week, unique-to-the-industry seminar that familiarized customers and employees with many aspects of Western's many-faceted business.*

1942

The company entered into an agreement that would later pinpoint the birth date of Golden Books at Western.

The arrangement was that Western would create and manufacture Golden Books for Simon and Schuster. This relationship marked the beginning of one of the world's greatest publishing success stories. (Details about that success story are found on pages 19 through 28.)

1950

Sales reached $40-million by 1950. The employee populace was up to 2,000. And a new decade of expansion was on the horizon.

Within a year, the company's close association with still another publisher led to the production of printed items for people of the Roman Catholic faith. Guild Press, Inc., was subsequently founded as a subsidiary of Western to help plan, finance and manufacture parochial school textbooks and supplementary materials, adult Catholic books, religious greeting cards and gift wrap.

In 1952, Western purchased all assets of the National Process Company, Clifton, New Jersey, and thereby absorbed the personnel, equipment and volume that would enable Western to concentrate on high quality map production.

And in 1953, with sales topping $55-million, Western again explored new territory by signing a long-term agreement with the American Yearbook Company, an Owatonna, Minnesota, leading distributor of high school and college yearbooks. This venture was followed two years later by Western's construction of a new manufacturing plant in Hannibal, Missouri, to do this specialized printing. . .and, during unused press time, to produce commercial jobs such as house publications, savings stamp books, parts books and manuals.

During the mid-1950's, Western was also saddened by the loss of E.H. Wadewitz and Roy A. Spencer.

These two leaders had, from the very beginning, provided the drive and spirit, the business savvy and practical experience required to turn a handful of people and a couple of presses into one of the largest printing and publishing enterprises the world has ever seen.

(Though both life-long leaders left Western's midst, each, in a sense, continue to guide the reins of Western. Their founding principles of honesty with and respect for people—employees and customers, licensors, other associates and members of the community—remain as a major strength of the company.)

In the early 1950's, E.H. Wadewitz was found in a number of situations that provided photographic proof of his long-term friendships and associations. In 1953, E.H. and Roy A. Spencer, his printing partner from the early days, were probably sharing some nostalgic memories when they reviewed a book at a Twenty-Year Club meeting (top of page). In the early 1950's, E.H. also was frequently seen with his good friends, Walter and Gracie Lantz of Hollywood (middle). Lantz was the originator of Woody Woodpecker, a successful Western property since 1941. Other visitors included Roy Rogers and Dale Evans (left), popular movie stars who were featured in Western products. Many other "stars" also appeared on or in Western's products in these years. Some of them were the ever-popular Walt Disney and Looney Tunes characters.

Page 11 was missing from the scans posted by Joakim Gunnarsson on his Sekvenskonst blog in 2013, starting at http://sekvenskonst.blogspot.com/2013/03/the-westerner-1982-part-i.html

1960

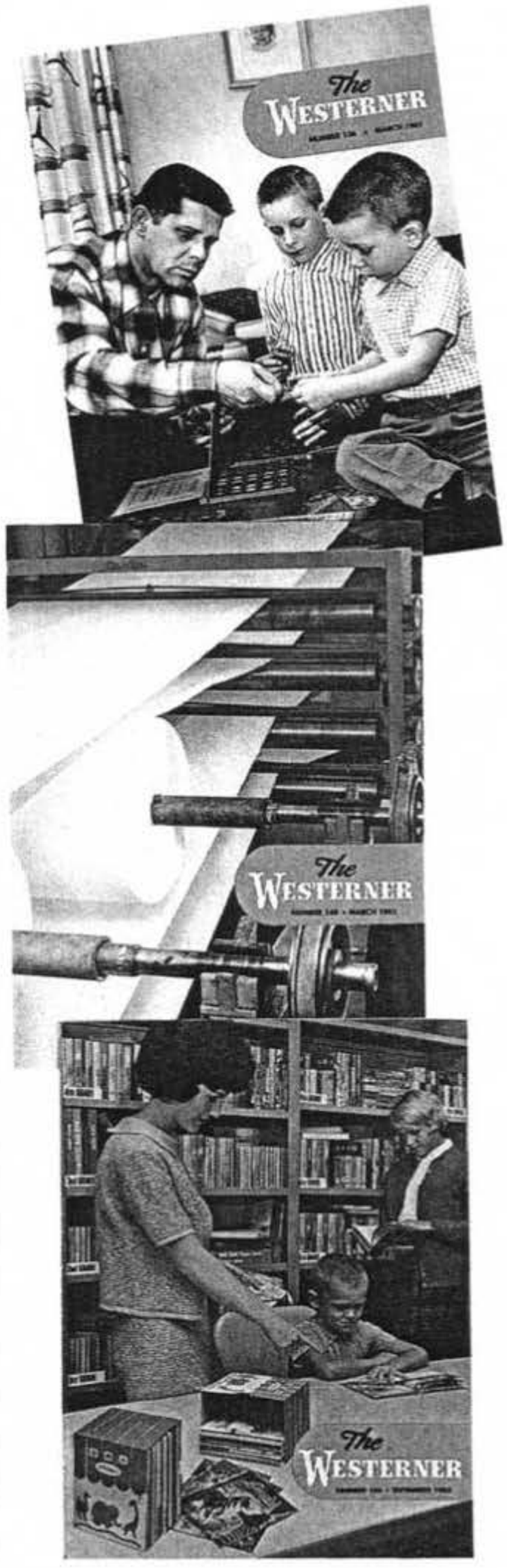
After offering a portion of its common stock to the public for the first time in history, the company in 1960 adopted its present name, Western Publishing Company, Inc.

(Western Printing & Lithographing Co. remained as the principle operating unit of the business. Its name was used for many years by purchasing, payroll and several of the firm's sales teams.)

Although stock was offered to the public, the distribution still left almost 80 percent of common stock in the hands of employees, with no individual owning more than five percent.

Also in 1960, Western established its first overseas subsidiary, Les Editions des Deux Coqs d'Or (DCO), Paris, France, a former French licensee that had been distributing Golden Books throughout France for 10 years. (Since the acquisition of this subsidiary, DCO has created many of the titles to be sold in the French-speaking areas of Canada.)

Later in 1960, Western purchased a modest interest in Western Publishing-Hachette International, S.A., Geneva, Switzerland, for the purpose of licensing and distributing children's books in other parts of Europe. From this relationship, Western also obtained an interest in Mondadori-Western, S.A., Milan, Italy, which created and published children's titles in the Italian language.



The Westerner *continued to highlight Western's activity during the 1960's. (Top): A father and his sons share some of Western's well-known Whitman coin collector's products. (Middle): At Western, paper is processed by the* miles! *(Bottom): Increasingly, Western's regular consumer products and educational products were seen in the educational area. (Opposite page): When President John F. Kennedy was assassinated, Western produced more than three-million copies of the commemorative book,* The Torch Is Passed, *for the Associated Press.*

1961

If Western could have been called busy overseas in 1960, then its domestic activity in 1961 must have been considered nothing short of furious.

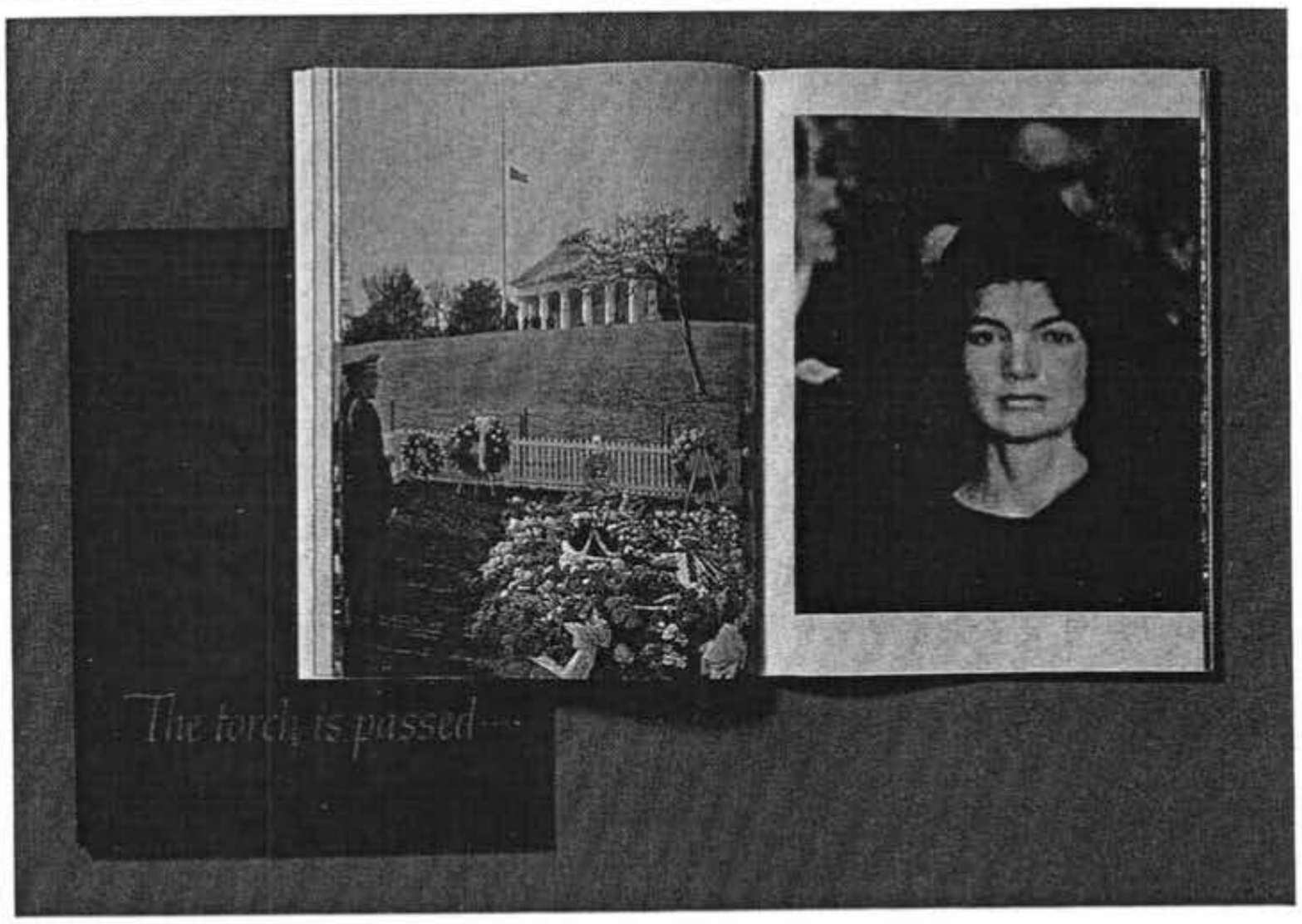
Capitol Publishing Company, Inc., New York City, came first, acquired to give Western an entree into the field of educational kits and teaching materials. Capitol specialized in the design and marketing of activity and coloring books, adventure kits, first learning games and novelties.

The second Western expansion step was taken with its purchase of The Odyssey Press, Inc., also of New York City. Founded in 1917, Odyssey was a high school and college book publisher that evolved out of the textbook department of Doubleday, Page & Company. Odyssey served Western by adding to the parent company's creative editorial capabilities and broadening its penetration of the educational market.

About the same time, Western acquired its third business entity of the year, Graphic Arts Process Company, Detroit, which was a small but superior lithographer that handled the printing needs of a number of auto-makers in the Detroit area.

In mid-year, Western announced that, for efficiency's sake, it was bringing together under one roof its operating unit and certain of its New York City-based subsidiaries and affiliates. At this time, the Western Publishing Company Building on Third Avenue housed employees that represented such entities as Western Printing & Lithographing Co., Artists and Writers Press, Inc. (formerly Artists & Writers Guild), Whitman Publishing Company, Capitol Publishing Company, Kable Printing Company and Golden Press, Inc.

Shortly thereafter, Western purchased the Nemethy-Davis Company, Detroit, experts



in direct mail planning, the production of mailers, maintenance of lists and actual mailing operations. Nemethy-Davis brought to Western yet another new dimension that strengthened its overall business capabilities.

And that wasn't all. When the fall of 1961 arrived, Western opened a newly constructed manufacturing plant in Cambridge, Maryland. Built principally to help service the high volume east coast yearbook market served by the American Yearbook Company, this plant (like the Hannibal facility) supplemented yearbook work with various commercial printing jobs.

On the foreign front in 1961, Western acquired 50 percent interest in Golden Pleasure Books, Ltd., London, England, a firm engaged in the creation, production and distribution of Golden Books throughout the British Isles. Americas Publishing Company also was established in 1961 to distribute certain Western products in the western hemisphere. (During this period, Western overseas operations were headquartered in Paris.)

Finally, 1961 went out with a bang as sales reached $124-million, a new all-time high.

Western wasn't about to sit back and savor its success, however. In 1962, Western christened a new warehouse in Wayne, New Jersey, for consumer products and, later, school and library book distribution.

In late 1963, shock waves were sent around the world as millions of people were stunned by the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Many people felt an insatiable hunger for information and visual accounts of the event—not only right after the shooting, but for many months later. Western played an integral part in helping to satisfy this craving for information with the historic printing of *The Torch Is Passed,* a 100-page picture and story account of the tragic death of the president. The book was produced for the Associated Press.

When all was said and done, Western had produced over three-million copies of the book. At that time, this print quantity represented the largest first printing of a hard cover book in history.

1964

Anticipating that Golden Books still had a long, profitable future, Western became the sole owner of all Golden properties in late 1964.

Golden Books had enjoyed perennial success for over 20 years when Western acquired the remaining 50 percent interest in Golden Press, owned by Pocket Books. Western then began to enjoy all of the inherent advantages that come with a wholly-owned subsidiary. Of course, the purchase meant that all Golden Book sales and distribution formerly handled by Pocket Books were now in the hands of Western. Consequently, the trade segment of The Odyssey Press was given sales responsibility for the Golden adult book market while accountability for children's Golden Book sales was picked up by the Western sales staff.

Another banner year in sales was enjoyed in 1965. Sales surpassed $137-million, and corporate employment topped 6,000 for the first time in history.

1967

It became clear that so many separate business entities working under the Western wing called for a reorganization to define and clarify lines of responsibility.

Hence, in 1967, eight divisions were officially formed. (Several of these divisions had actually been functioning as separate business segments for years.) These divisions included:

Whitman Publishing (the largest)
Golden Press
Educational Publishing
Consumer Products Sales
Plant Operations
Commercial Products Sales
Whitman Golden of Canada
European Operations

And in 1968, Western marked its first complete departure from ink-on-paper acquisitions when it purchased Skil-Craft Playthings, Inc., for 100,000 shares of Western common stock. Skil-Craft, then 20 years old, was a Chicago-based leader in craft kits and a manufacturer of juvenile laboratory science sets.

Strengthening its assets in commercial printing, Western in 1969 established Datapage, a new computer typesetting facility in St. Charles, Missouri.

On the consumer end that year, Western leased a new 168,000-square-foot distribution center in Sparks, Nevada, which served eight far western states—Washington, Oregon, California, Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Utah and Nevada.

Additionally, two significant highs were hit in 1969. Sales reached $169-million, another all-time record, and domestic employment for the year began at 6,617. (This was the largest work force Western ever carried.)

©General Mills, Inc.

1970

The new decade posed challenges that were met head-on with the same fervor and spirit that led the company's founders through severe uncertainty some 60-odd years beforehand.

In 1971, one of the most successful direct marketing ventures ever was introduced to the nation by Western's direct mail entity. The Betty Crocker Recipe Card Library had its debut that year. (To date, more than eight-million people have gone through the entire program, an incredibly high completion total for a direct marketing package.)

Sales climbed to $205-million in 1973, marking the first time that Western ever cracked the $200-million mark.

Early that year, Western entered into an agreement to acquire a 49 percent interest in Golden Press Pty., New South Wales, Australia, a company founded in 1950 to market Golden Books throughout Australia and New Zealand.

And two weeks prior to the year's end, Western common stock was admitted to trading on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol WP. The move gave stockholders their first access to the broad, closely regulated national market provided by the 'Big Board.' The year 1973 also marked the 40th consecutive year that a cash dividend was distributed.

Starting in the 1970's, Western initiated new sales methods and a more diverse product range. (Above): The Betty Crocker Recipe Card Library was sold via Western's direct mail facilities. Also, commercial sales people soon started to offer customers more products and services that, in time, would include an array of formats (right): magazines, calendars, activity books, manuals, educational kits, greeting cards, shaped books, cookbooks, displayers. . . and more.

1974

Another major development occurred in 1974 when Western's valued customer and long-time friend, Dell Publishing Company, signed a ten-year printing contract estimated in excess of $50-million.

The agreement, which took effect January 1, 1976, continues to be the largest printing contract—in terms of sales and volume—ever negotiated by Western.

Just as cramped quarters in Racine forced Western to establish a Corporate Data Center in 1967, so, too, did a similar situation in 1974 prompt the company to acquire two additional buildings previously owned by a college that went bankrupt. In the spring, Western's consumer products marketing and sales groups moved into one of the structures as phase one of a two-part plan to alleviate overcrowding at its Main Plant.

And, in 1974, groundbreaking ceremonies were held in Fayetteville, North Carolina, at the construction site of a new 470,000-square-foot Western consumer products distribution and game and puzzle assembly center. The following year, the new facility was opened and had an immediate positive impact on distribution by processing almost two-thirds of the company's domestic consumer products shipments.

(Left): A new Play Research Center, established in the Creative Center in 1976, provided an exciting new facility where Western could carefully test games and other products for both consumer and commercial customers. The Center tests a proposed product's visual appeal, age appropriateness, play value and rule clarity. (Above): By 1974, Western's Scribbler line had grown to include Magic Wipe-Off Boards. The line had begun in 1970 with the bright, bold Scribbler graphics on the cover of a drawing tablet. In time, Scribbler would appear on more than 120 different items (including stencil boxes and copy books) that help youngsters learn their a,b,c's, 1,2,3's and other basics. (Right): The Cameron Book Production System, installed in 1974, can print, bind, trim, wrap and palletize in the same line of operation!

Meanwhile, back in Racine, Western installed its first and only Cameron Book Production System in 1974. Since its start-up, this million-dollar, one-of-a-kind machine has produced in excess of 325,000,000 coloring and related activity books.

With the advent of 1976, Western entered into an entirely new marketing outlet with the birth of a new subsidiary, Leisure Home Parties, Inc.

Operating out of corporate headquarters in Racine, impetus for the creation of Leisure Home Parties came when three years of testing concluded that a variety of Western consumer products could be merchandised successfully through the home party plan made famous by Tupperware and other companies who sell via the party plan method.

To help eliminate crowded conditions at the Main Plant that spring, Western's Racine creative staff settled into the second of two former college buildings acquired two years earlier.

Late in 1976, the second and final step towards improving distribution was initiated by Western with groundbreaking festivities in Coffeyville, Kansas, the future site of a new 520,000-square-foot distribution and game and puzzle assembly center.

During this time, Western continued to set new sales records. For the first time, sales surpassed $250-million by finishing at $263-million in 1977, up a dramatic 11 percent over the previous year's $237-million.

And in 1978, sales rose to $275-million.

Mattel

WESTERN®

At the time that Mattel acquired Western, Mattel was by no means a stranger to Western. Starting in 1963, many Western products had been enhanced with Mattel characters. The product range continued to grow (below), and in time it included books, games, puzzles and activity products that featured Barbie, Hot Wheels, Masters of the Universe and other popular Mattel properties. (Opposite page, top): Japanese Little Golden Books. (Bottom): Included in this collection are books, book ends and flash cards from the Direct Marketing Sesame Street Book Club. . .plus the trophy that celebrated the "Millionth Member Milestone" achieved in 1982.

1979

While it was "business as usual," the many successes enjoyed by Western naturally attracted considerable attention from larger firms looking to extend their corporate arms.

Thus Western, a company that owed a lion's share of its growth to corporate acquisition, now found itself a prime candidate for takeover. Though Western did not solicit activity in this area, all proposals were reviewed with utmost interest. Speculation surfaced. And Western was verbally linked to several interested buyers.

Finally, all but one of the rumors was laid to rest. On January 9, 1979, Western and Mattel, Inc. (one of the largest U.S. toy manufacturers) jointly announced "an agreement in principle for the acquisition of all of Western's common stock by Mattel in exchange for an aggregate consideration of 2,416,375 shares of a new cumulative $25 voting convertible preferred stock plus approximately $47.9-million in cash."

The acquisition became official June 15 of that year "with the completion of all necessary filings in appropriate jurisdictions." The arrangement had all indications that it would be highly compatible. Mattel also possessed a strong consumer base directed to children as well as to adults, and both Western and Mattel were known for the production of highly popular quality products marketed and sold through similar distribution channels.

Mattel soon generated a strong influence on the direction of Western's Consumer and Commercial products divisions. In the consumer area, Western now placed increasing emphasis on a new marketing orientation, due in large part to the solid marketing reputation of its parent company. Market research was stepped up considerably at Western, and subsequent product development reflected this. New products, and their special "drawing card" features, were now created almost exclusively in response to the needs, desires and interests expressed by consumers of all ages.

Western's commercial printing business also began to shift its emphasis as a result of the Western-Mattel merger. Following the acquisition, Western's commercial efforts concentrated on two areas: 1) the printing of jobs that can be enhanced by drawing upon the resources of Western's talented creative staff. . .thus providing commercial customers with the total package—from concept through delivery; and 2) emphasis on the printing of jobs that Western can produce at a competitive price, thus assuring Western of a more attractive return on investment.

This shift in business emphasis soon proved extremely successful, and the shift elevated commercial printing to a position just short of being an equal financial partner to consumer products, which had become the company's new "bread and butter" profit center in the 1920's.

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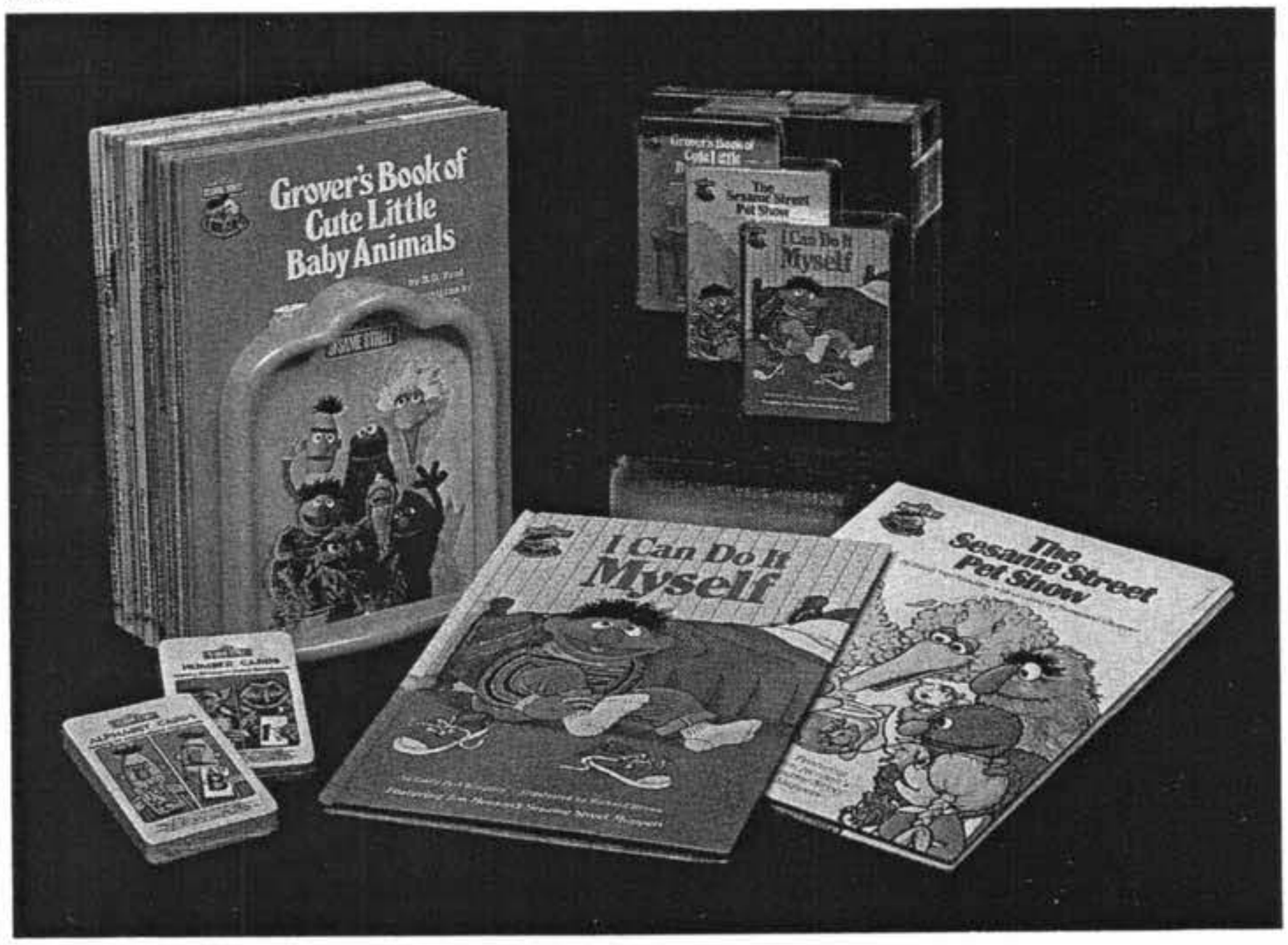


1980

In the fall of 1980, Western launched the Sesame Street Book Club, a tremendously successful project that was possible because of the joint efforts of Western's Direct Marketing Division, Western's children's book publishing group and the Sesame Street licensor, the Children's Television Workshop.

The collaboration of these three prime groups became a more recent example of Western's long-time tendency to work in a cooperative spirit in order to produce product and profit.

Also in 1980, the Skil-Craft Division of Western relocated its manufacturing plant from Chicago to Fayetteville, just a few miles from Western's distribution and game and puzzle assembly center there. By moving its operation south, Skil-Craft was able to increase efficiency and reduce labor costs.

International expansion occurred again in 1981 with Western's establishment of Golden Books, Japan, Ltd. Headquartered in Tokyo, this office enabled Western to engage in Golden and Whitman product penetration in Japanese and Far East markets.

Sales ended at $277.9-million in 1981, an all-time record.

In 1981, the climate at Western reflected the climate of a nation—and a world—in the midst of economic difficulty. One result of the reflection was that many Westerners who were still on board reverted to an old-fashioned dedication to give their company their very best. . .to do whatever they could to help improve Western's picture.

1982

Western now looks to the past with pride, to the present with insight and to the future with hope and optimism.

Adverse economic conditions have continued to take their toll on almost all who operate within the sphere of the modern business climate, and Western has by no means been immune to these contagious doldrums.

Nonetheless, the company in fact built its future in the face of adversity. It started with one man who had a dream, realized it, and then invited others to share in it. The going wasn't easy, yet hard work was made that much more pleasant because of the company's high-spirited leadership.

Western's employees have survived a shaky start and later a depression, a world war, countless production challenges and scores of acquisitions and expansions, some of which have proved successful, some of which have not. Many of the acquired businesses and buildings are gone today, unfortunate casualties of ever-changing leadership strategies and the economy. And, too, there are fewer Westerners employed than in the years of optimum growth.

So, though 1982 was a difficult year, it was an important year in Western's growth. With the assistance of Mattel's vision, Western could better recognize the strength of its best resources: its people, its expertise in so many business areas, its excellent reputation and its fine relationships with so many customers, licensors and other associates.

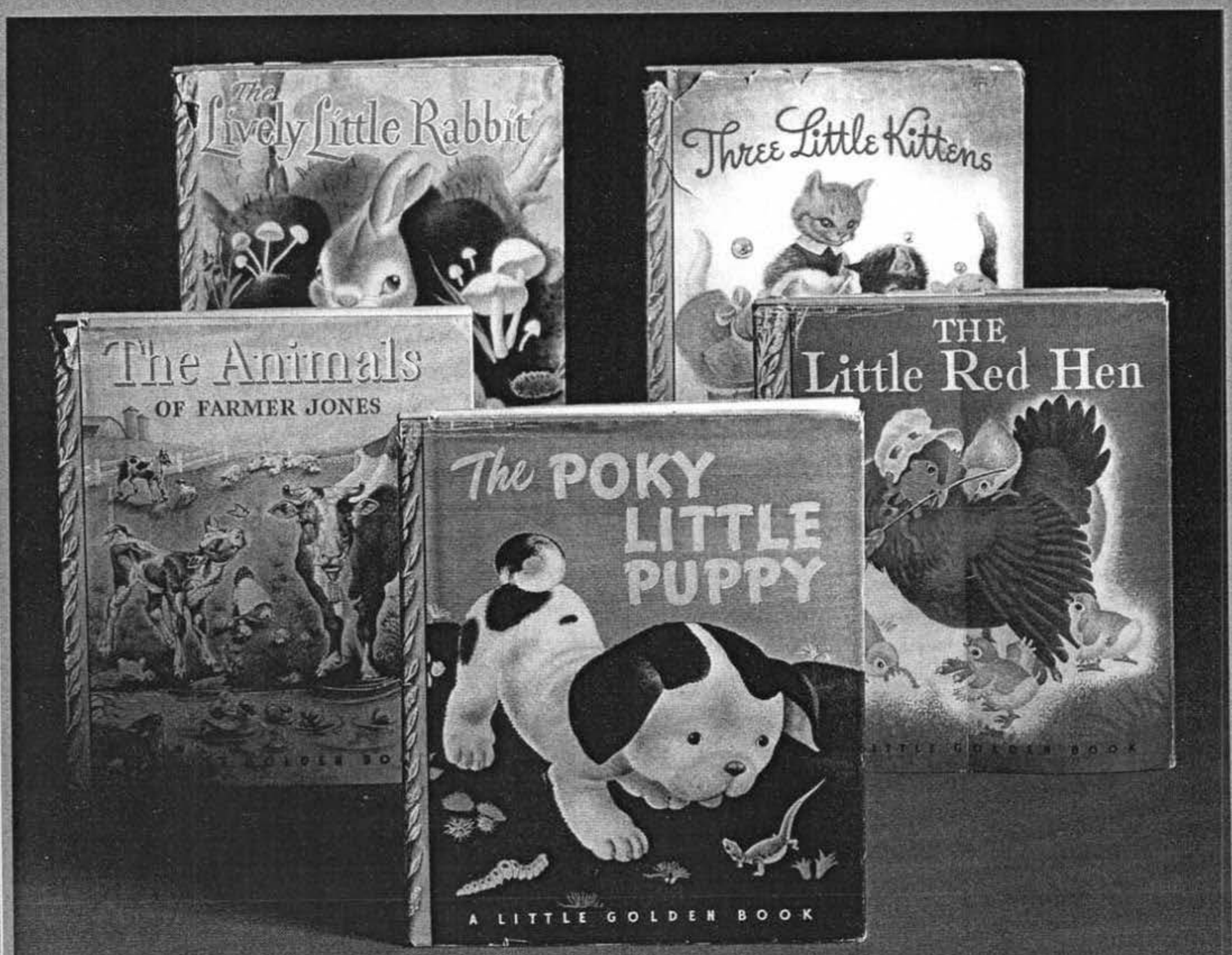
And now, more than ever before, Western could also recognize the advantages of blending these resources together, whenever possible, in the same cooperative spirit that has always been Western's.

Thus, as its 75th year comes to a close, Western anticipates continued strength from its traditional and proven sources of revenue. And it also investigates exciting new ways to draw upon its resources and to use them: for Western's consumer products lines, for Western's commercial customers. . . and, too, for other yet-to-be determined ventures that will use these resources in not-yet-announced innovative ways.

This current optimistic drive is evidence of the Westerner spirit that is sure to lead the company through the dense fog of the current recession and into the clear of growth and prosperity.

For an update on the status of Western at year's end, 1982, turn to the inside back cover, where names, addresses and phone numbers are listed for Western's locations, principal businesses and sales offices.

Golden Books: A Much-Loved Tradition for Millions of Families for 40 Years



On the occasion of the Golden Book 40th anniversary, Western could confidently say that there's been a Golden Book published for every season. . .and almost every reason.

There are Golden Book cookbooks, field guides and encyclopedias. Golden Book mystery books and adventures. And Golden Books have covered a tremendous array of other subjects as well. Science and technology. . .religion. . .philosophy. . .health, beauty and safety. . .arts, crafts and music . . .leisure time and work time. . .riddles, jokes and funny facts. . .sports. . .social studies, weather. . .

And, certainly, storybooks. For storybooks were part of the Little Golden Book list that introduced Golden Books in 1942, and storybooks have remained a strong and constant part of the Golden charm through the years.

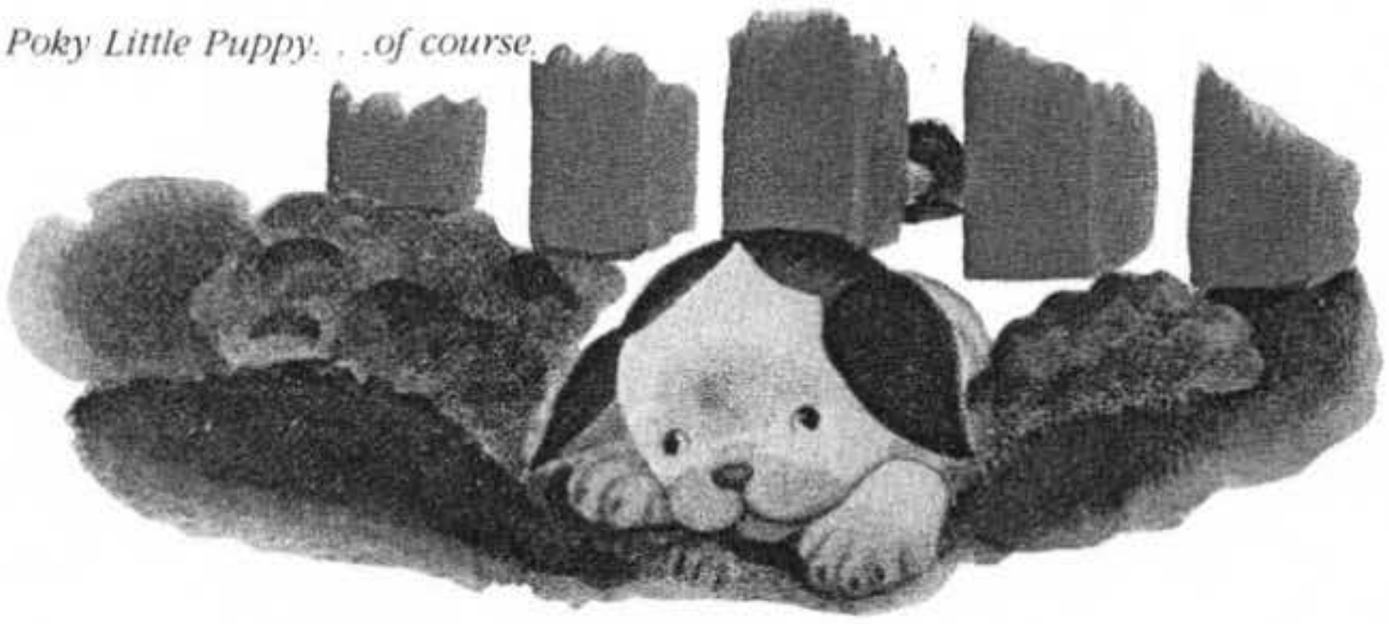
In reviewing the 40 years of Golden's existence, it's not surprising to discover that the Golden publishing business has had some stories of its own. . .and that all of the stories don't necessarily agree. For through the years, Golden has evoked the talents and energies of many dedicated people who, by the very nature of their creative spirit, have had varying viewpoints about product lines, book titles, market strategies and, too, about who did what. . .and when.

Thus, some people who have talked about the history of Golden have offered conflicting information. And some facts are, therefore, debatable. Even so, every effort was made to search out printed, recorded material to substantiate all of the information contained herein.

Western hopes that readers understand that the most important message in the Golden story is not the exact date, number or name connected with each event. The most important message is that Golden Books have always been prepared by authors, editors, artists, designers, printers—and others—who have felt a sincere responsibility to prepare Golden Books with a great deal of care and concern. And that's the Golden part of the Golden tradition.

Forty years is a long time for book jackets to remain intact. Thus, this photograph (left) must of necessity include some tattered samples of five of the original 15 Little Golden Books: The Poky Little Puppy *by Janette Sebring Lowrey and illustrated by Gustaf Tenggren;* The Animals of Farmer Jones *and* The Little Red Hen, *illustrated by Rudolf Freund;* The Lively Little Rabbit *by Ariane and illustrated by Gustaf Tenggren; and* Three Little Kittens, *illustrated by Masha.*

The Poky Little Puppy. . .of course.



If life does, indeed, begin at forty, then the Poky Little Puppy certainly can anticipate a sunny, bright outlook in his "later years." For, as he celebrates his 40th birthday in conjunction with the 40th birthday of Golden Books, Poky can claim the distinct honor of selling 6,784,000 Little Golden Books. And, as 1982 comes to an end, his famous book achieves its 49th printing.

That's not bad for a slow-moving little dog who gained notoriety for sniffing out rice pudding and sitting at the bottom of a hill "listening" to the far away "sounds" of his mother's chocolate custard.

And, some of Poky's Little Golden Book siblings have a similar legacy. The Lively Little Rabbit, born in 1943, has sold 4,346,800 books, and his book has been reprinted 30 times. Tootle, who entered the literary world in 1945, has achieved 5,938,500 sales, and his book was recently reprinted for the 42nd time. Scuffy the tugboat, who joined the Little Golden Book family in 1946, has now sold 5,252,000 books, and his book has been reprinted 33 times. And the Saggy Baggy Elephant, who came along in 1947, has sold 5,559,000 books, and his book was reprinted for the 32nd time in 1982.

These are obviously impressive sales and print records in the book business. And they are evidence of the legendary popularity of Little Golden Books, a much-loved tradition in homes all over America and all over the world.

To fully understand the legendary impact of Golden Books on society (both here and abroad), it helps to briefly consider the attitudes about children's books that were prevalent in the 1920's and 1930's. Chief among these attitudes was the belief that it would be impossible to sell high-quality juvenile books to the mass-market audience and to also stay out of the red. During this period, traditional children's books were printed in small runs that resulted in high retail prices.

Moreover, many typical children's titles weren't marketed as children's books. Walt Disney's *Bambi,* for example, was first published in 1928 and was sold as an adult book. It contained a few illustrations and relied primarily on its text for appeal.

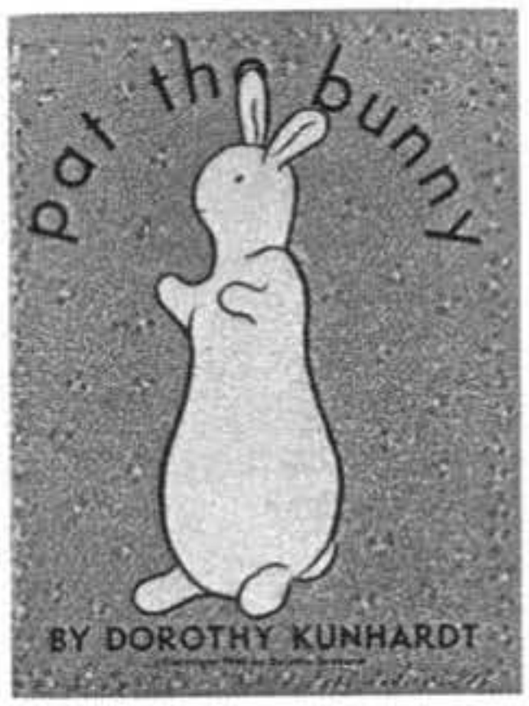
By that time, Western (then Western Printing & Lithographing Co.) had experienced a successful entry into the children's book field (as explained on pages 5 and 6). But Western never could have anticipated that its creative and printing capabilities would soon enable the company to embark on one of the most successful publishing ventures ever initiated.

Western can actually trace its pre-Golden Book days to 1938, when it printed its first book—*A Child's History*—for Simon and Schuster, Inc.

That same year, Simon and Schuster, a young outfit of 14 years and sporting just 13 employees, promoted five-year "veteran" Al Leventhal to the position of sales manager. As the story goes, Al and several of the company's executives had growing families, and out of this grew a natural, self-serving serious interest in children's book publishing, an area that Simon and Schuster had not yet been active in.

In 1939, Western and Simon and Schuster entered the juvenile book field full swing with the reissue of Walt Disney's *Bambi,* which was revised into an attractive, colorful work of art. Later, Walt Disney's *Fantasia* was similarly published, and both books met with unexpected success. *Bambi* sold over 50,000 copies, and *Fantasia* topped 20,000, selling for $3.75, which was at that time an unbelievably high price for a children's book. This success led to high-flying anticipation from both companies that a profitable mass market might actually exist for juvenile books.

On the edge of an historical publishing breakthrough, Georges Duplaix and Lucille Ogle of Artists & Writers Guild, Inc. (a creative arm of Western headquartered in New York City), Dick Simon, Max Schuster, Al Leventhal and Leon Shimkin (then company treasurer of Simon and Schuster) gathered on numerous occasions at the Duplaix home in Sands Point, Long Island, to ponder the children's book situation.



1942

The big question these innovative publishing people asked themselves was this: *"What can we do in the children's book field that is completely revolutionary and, at the same time, will fill a long-standing need in juvenile literature?"*

After an initial plan to produce fifty-cent books fell through, a meeting one day at the Simon and Schuster offices solved the problem. Shimkin is said to have suggested, "We're having quite a lot of success with our new twenty-five cent Pocket Book line. Wouldn't it be possible to do the same thing in children's books?"

"I've wanted to do a twenty-five cent line for years," Duplaix commented. "Of course it can be done if enough can be sold."

Leventhal acknowledged, "If the books are any good, it will be a cinch."

Out of this conversation came the big answer: *Little Golden Books.*

Simon and Schuster's Essandess Division, publishers of handsome, perfect-bound reader's editions of select successful books, made the first move by going out on a limb with an order of 50,000 each of the initial 12 titles created by Artists and Writers. This figure appeared far too ambitious, though the sales department reassured all concerned that it would still break even if only half of the books sold the first year.

(Top, left): Pat the Bunny *was a "pre-Golden" book. (Top, right): Soon after 1942, more Little Golden Books were added to the list. All Little Golden Books were reviewed by Mary Reed, Ph.D., Teachers College, Columbia University, New York. This was an indication of the care taken by Artists and Writers to produce books that would be absolutely appropriate for young children. Other indications of the group's commitment to produce the best possible books are highlighted in this advertisement from an early catalog: "The country's outstanding children's artists and writers have joined forces to create these books. Each Little Golden Book contains 42 pages, 16 of them in full color reproduced by the most advanced printing methods known."*

An advertisement in the September 9, 1942, edition of Publisher's Weekly *announced to the nation a new literary experiment: "If Little Golden Books are successful (and we have every reason to suspect that they will be)," the ad concluded, "new ones will be brought out at regular intervals throughout the year."*

Enthusiasm hit rock bottom, however, after Leventhal returned from a stint of trying to sell Little Golden Books to bookstores. As Western presses and binders cranked out new titles, better than 50 percent of Simon and Schuster's regular customers voiced strong reservations about the product. *"Twenty-five cent books won't sell,"* they said, *"and even if they did, they could ruin the sales of more expensive books with higher markups."*

At this point, the only thing that kept everyone concerned from calling the project a total loss was the enthusiasm of some die-hard, devoted buyers for Macy's, Gimbel's and Marshall Field's who believed that Little Golden Books would be a child's dream come true.

Doubts about the longevity of Little Golden Books were soon cleared one memorable day when a large shipment of the first run was delivered to a small bookseller in New Britain, Connecticut, for a test preview. In just 36 hours, 864 books were sold!

Within five months of publication, three editions totaling 1.5-million books sold out. The problem suddenly shifted from *"Will they sell?"* to *"Can we keep up with the demand?"*

World War II paper rationing complicated matters, forcing Simon and Schuster to ration one book for every 10 ordered while refusing thousands of new accounts. Western itself was having difficulty holding its own. At one point, it attempted to farm out some of its work to help ease production strain, but these efforts proved futile: An overworked mounting machine in the plant of a subcontractor fell through the floor as if to protest the number of hours it was asked to put in.

By 1944, it was obvious that Little Golden Books would be around for many years to come. Capitalizing on their popularity—and the "magic" of the Golden name—the first Big and Giant Golden Books were introduced. Among the initial titles produced by Western's Poughkeepsie, New York, manufacturing plant were *The Golden Dictionary,* Feodor Rojankovsky's *Animal Stories,* Tenggren's *Story Book* and Walt Disney's first high-priced children's book, *Surprise Package.* Their success made it necessary for Poughkeepsie to expand its plant in order to increase production.

A couple of years later, Deluxe Golden Books entered the scene, along with *The Golden Encyclopedia* and an incredibly popular *The Golden Treasury of Natural History.*

Business grew fast. So fast, in fact, that Simon and Schuster established a new firm, Sandpiper Press, for the purpose of exploring new Golden editorial ideas, and also to maintain a liaison with the creative talent of Artists and Writers. Duplaix and Leventhal became co-directors of the new company.

During the long, active creative life of this group, Artists and Writers—in collaboration with some of the most loved authors and illustrators—produced many exceptional books, including *Life* magazine's *The World We Live In,* Louis Untermeyer's *The Golden Treasury of Poetry, The Sea Around Us* and children's favorites such as *Tiny Animal Stories* and *Tiny Nonsense Stories,* written by Dorothy Kunhardt and illustrated by Garth Williams.

1947

With World War II ending, and materials in abundance once again, sales of Little Golden Books reached 39-million copies, a record for that time.

The war effort had actually benefited the books by making them a commodity of limited supply during wartime. When they became freely available after the war, sales were impressively boosted. More titles—20 to 30 every six months—were added to the line, and the Golden Book list for the consumer market now included more than 500 books.

Then one day in 1948, books for the educational market became a topic of conversation between Leventhal (then director of sales for Simon and Schuster) and Virgil Gentilin, a national book buyer for Montgomery Ward, an important customer of the publishing firm. While chatting about a Ward's Christmas catalog, Leventhal and Gentilin started to talk about the existing practice in the trade whereby library binders purchased Golden Books, tore off their covers, rebound them according to American Library Association standards and then sold them to libraries at exorbitant prices. Leventhal and Gentilin both considered the process wasteful and extravagant. And they felt that there was no reason why librarians should pay up to $1.50 for a twenty-five cent Little Golden Book.

Disgusted over this practice, Gentilin (a 14-year veteran of school and library sales prior to his position at Ward's) submitted a plan to Simon and Schuster for the manufacture of tougher bound, durable books that could be offered to schools and libraries at reasonable prices. Thus, plans were initiated for the Goldencraft Division of Simon and Schuster that would begin in early 1949 with Gentilin as its only employee.

1949

"How in the world do you expect to sell fifty thousand copies of a bird book?" was a memorable question asked by Al Leventhal when Birds, *the first Golden Guide, made its appearance.*

The *Birds* book was published in 1949, much to the chagrin of Leventhal. Nature lovers were obviously pleased with the content, and the book became the forerunner for a line of more than two dozen successful Golden Guides (and, later, additional lines of Regional Guides, Golden Handbooks and Golden Field Guides).

Yet another major growth occurred in 1949 when Les Petits Livres d'Or (Little Golden Books) were first introduced overseas. Simon and Schuster signed an agreement with Flammarion, a large, famous French publishing house with which Artists and Writers had made arrangements in the past to publish American editions of Flammarion titles. The first contract between Simon and Schuster and Flammarion called for 10 titles of 50,000 each to be marketed under the publishing imprint Editions Corcorico (subsequently changed to Les Editions des Deux Coqs d'Or). Among the chosen books were American favorites such as *Pouf-Pata-Pouf, L'Elephant (The Saggy Baggy Elephant), Le Petit Chat Timide (The Shy Little Kitten)* and *Les Trois Ours (The Three Bears).*

Cooperation between the three publishing companies enabled Flammarion to manufacture the books in Paris with the same attractive cost advantages yielded by their production in the U.S. Therefore, French Little Golden Books displayed a cover price of 95 francs (then equal to about twenty-five cents), which was a fine price comparison to the 200 francs—and more—asked for comparable French children's books.

Meanwhile, back home in the U.S., the Goldencraft Division of Simon and Schuster weathered a modest $150,000 in sales its first year. Though this sales figure was not monumental, it reflected an important move for Golden Books. Now more children and their families would be able to find Golden Books on the shelves in their schools and libraries.

1953

In 1953, Golden Books entered the White House when The Golden Treasury of Natural History *and* The Golden Geography *were selected for inclusion in the home library during President Dwight D. Eisenhower's first term in office.*

This was obviously an honor. And, by the mid 1950's, Golden Books achieved other honors. One was that Golden Books elevated Simon and Schuster to the enviable position of publishing more children's books than all other publishers combined. Golden Books also became the first children's books to appear at supermarket checkout counters, where they successfully held their own against perennial counter favorites such as candy and gum.

And Golden Books (translated into numerous foreign languages) were now also available in Australia, Mexico, Argentina, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Sweden and the Arabic countries.

Golden Books continued to put smiles on the faces of many important booksellers. And the increasing number of licensed characters in Golden Books pleased booksellers, children and parents. Some Golden Books featured much-loved characters such as Mickey Mouse, Minnie Mouse, Goofy and Donald Duck, who had been created with the magical touch of Walt Disney. Other books included favorite storybook characters that Walt Disney had brought to life in famous Walt Disney movies such as *Snow White, Pinnochio* and *Bambi.*

Other major licensors such as Warner Brothers, Inc., Roy Rogers Enterprises, American Heritage Publishing Company and the Columbia Broadcasting System also worked in a cooperative spirit with Golden Books. In time, fans of popular culture could read about their favorite characters in Golden Books.

Simon and Schuster itself reaped sizable royalties from licensing the *World of Little Golden Book Characters* created by Artists and Writers.

And in 1957, as the connection between the two companies grew, Leventhal left Simon and Schuster to join Western as president of Artists and Writers.

Two favorite Walt Disney characters in the late 1950's were Thumper and Bambi, so it's not surprising that they appeared (left) in the Walt Disney's How to Draw and Color Book *in 1960. In this book, Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck shared lessons on how to draw Walt Disney characters. (Below): With the introduction of* Betty Crocker's Good and Easy Cookbook *in 1959, Golden entered into another new publishing area that would eventually become extremely exciting for Western and for millions of Betty Crocker Cookbook enthusiasts.*

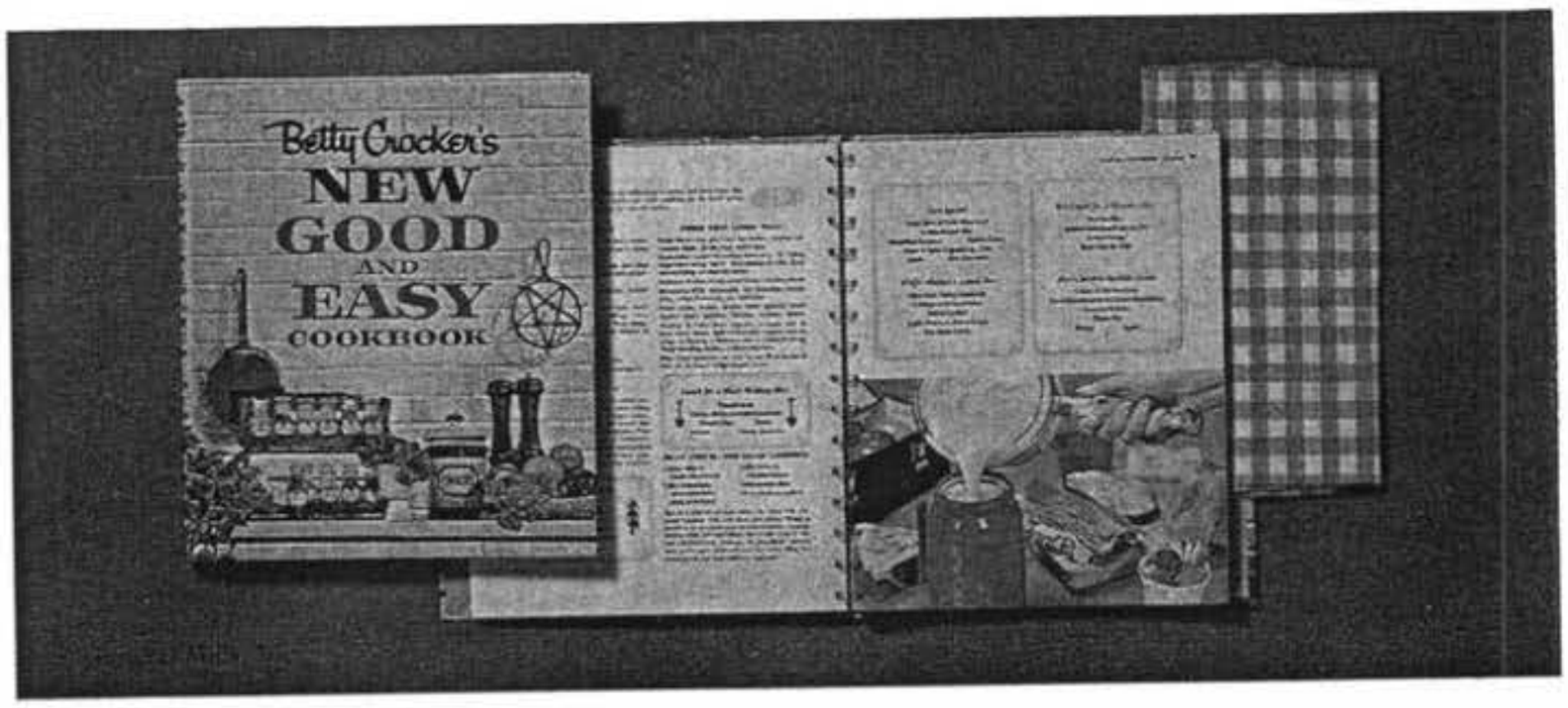
1958

In an historic "changing of the guard," Simon and Schuster decided to sell all Golden properties.

Previous to this change, Simon and Schuster—a division of Field Enterprises, Inc.—felt that juvenile books had become a disproportionate share of its business when it discovered that juvenile publishing now accounted for over 70 percent of its total sales. (Fifteen years earlier, Simon and Schuster had been a 99 percent adult publishing house.) Fortunately, Western and Pocket Books, Inc. (another division of Field Enterprises) did not concur with the opinion held by Simon and Schuster concerning juvenile book publishing.

So, when Simon and Schuster decided to sell its Golden properties, it readily found two interested buyers: Western and Pocket Books. Hence, the 1958 purchase of Golden Books was consummated, and a new company was founded: Golden Press, Inc. Under the agreement, Western created and manufactured the books; Pocket Books (whose majority interest was now controlled by the same Leon Shimkin who was involved with the birth of Little Golden Books) promoted, sold and distributed them.

Jim Jacobson, president of Affiliated Publishers (distributors of Golden Books under Simon and Schuster) and executive vice president of Pocket Books, was named chairman of the board of Golden Press; Leventhal was appointed president and continued to also serve as president of Artists and Writers.



1959

To say that the new firm prospered would be an understatement. By 1959, more than 150 Little Golden Book titles had become best-sellers, having sold at least one-million copies each. Over 400 of the more than 1,000 Golden Book titles were in print in 13 different languages. Golden Books were now recognized as valuable premiums for promotional efforts. And Golden Press entered another profitable field when Betty Crocker Cookbooks began to be marketed with the Golden name.

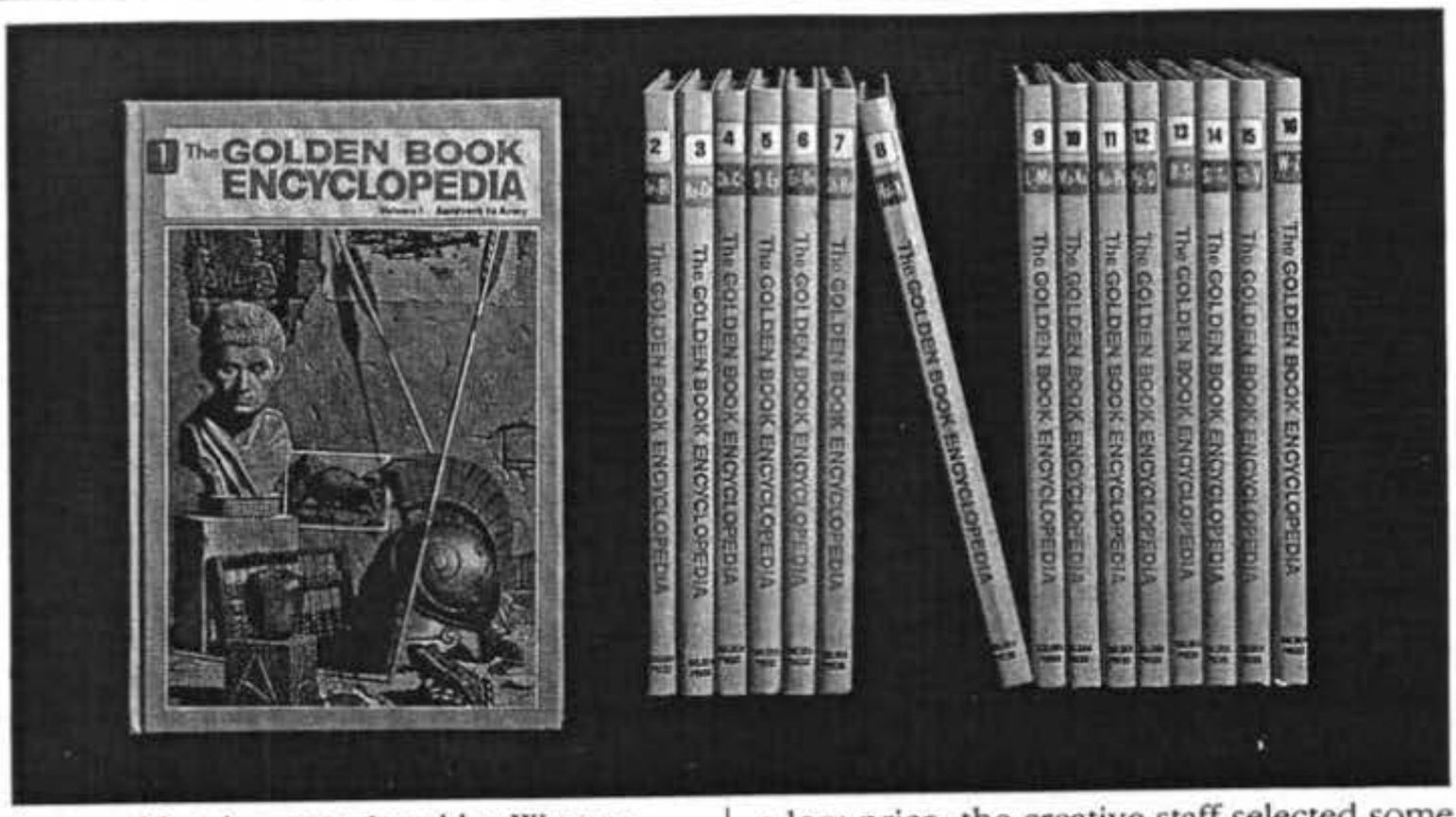
Details about business in the record-breaking year of 1959 were proof that the Golden name was more Golden than ever.

Sales for all-time favorites such as *The Poky Little Puppy, The Night Before Christmas* and *Prayers for Children* surpassed five-million copies each. And annual Golden Press sales easily topped $17-million, a dramatic growth of some $5-million since its formation a year earlier.

By now, Golden Books touched the lives of all juvenile age groups. Books ranged from Big and Giant Golden Books for young children to history, science and general reference works for high school and college students.

And for the first time, with the introduction of *Doctor Dan The Bandage Man,* Golden Books entered into the commercial world, becoming successful premiums for business and industrial promotions. The Doctor Dan Little Golden Book was created for Johnson & Johnson, the manufacturer of baby and child-care products. The book was packaged with six Band-Aids™, and it narrated a little boy's adventures as he used the product. Soon, other premium pieces evolved for the Industrial Tape Corportion (cellophane tape), International Cellucotton (Kleenex™) and International Harvester (trucks). *Nurse Nancy,* a second Band-Aid™ book, was produced for Johnson & Johnson, and the very successful *How To Tell Time* Little Golden Book was used by the Gruen Watch Company.

And in 1959, another important publishing first was the production of *Betty Crocker's Good and Easy Cookbook,* the



first cookbook ever printed by Western. Originally published by Simon and Schuster in 1954, Good and Easy was created by Western with editorial content supplied by the Betty Crocker Kitchens of General Mills, Inc. The book focused on convenience foods, an idea that made it a book ahead of its time.

1960

While the buying public continued to make Golden Books the hottest selling children's books in America, Golden Book editors were engaged in a quality study of leading encyclopedia sets for the young. What they uncovered formed the basis for what must have been one of the biggest gold mines in publishing history: The Golden Book Encyclopedia. *The set sold 60-million copies in two years, which hiked Golden Press total sales to almost $39-million in 1960.*

As the editors had discovered, most juvenile encyclopedias collected dust. Their print was too difficult to read, their illustrations were too few and their volumes were loaded with entries above the comprehension level of the average child. What's more, prices were too high, ranging from $125 to $300 per set.

Once the editors were aware of the problems, they went to work on the solution, which eventually became *The Golden Book Encyclopedia*. Dr. Bertha Morris Parker, its author and a noted authority in making difficult subjects clear to youngsters, spent more than 10 years on the project.

To produce this ambitious project, a special creative department was established in Western's Main Plant office in Racine, Wisconsin. The books were assembled at Poughkeepsie, New York, and to hold costs down in order to sell the encyclopedias at a low price, the creative staff selected some of the artwork from existing publications that Western had printed.

The Golden Book Encyclopedia marked the introduction of continuity publishing for Golden, and led the way for a later six-volume *Golden Book Picture Atlas of The World*, a six-volume *Golden Book Illustrated Dictionary* and other 10- to 20-volume sets such as *The Golden Home and High School Encyclopedia*, the *Golden Treasury of Knowledge*, the *Golden Treasury of Natural History* and the *Golden Book History of the United States*.

With the advent of these sets and their ensuing success, Golden Press had significantly penetrated the preteen and teen markets. Hence, the only logical way for it to go was up (in age), and it did just that.

A new juvenile arm, Capitol Publishing Company, was also established by Western to supply Golden Press with novelty books, hobby and educational items, plus a series of 14 adventure kits.

During the early 1960's, Golden Book adult lines also enjoyed prominence. Initial titles such as *Birds of The World, James Beard's Treasury of Outdoor Cooking, The Treasury of the Automobile* and *The Golden Encyclopedia of Art* were immediate best-sellers and continued for some time to break their own sales records.

And by 1963, when *Betty Crocker's Cooky Book* was introduced, the fast-growing line of Betty Crocker Cookbooks topped annual sales of more than one-million copies.

While these new markets created opportunities for new audiences, Golden Press never forgot about its largest audience: small children. The creative staffs continued to produce exciting new Golden Book titles. . .and to re-issue the much-loved favorites. In 1963, Richard Scarry's *Best Word Book Ever* was the first of many Richard Scarry Big Golden Books that achieved instant and constant popularity in this country and in all other countries where Golden Books were sold.

One of the ambitious projects for Golden in the 1960's was The Golden Book Encyclopedia, *a most successful, 16-volume set that was offered to supermarket customers via the elementary buy-a-volume-a-week plan. The set was geared specifically for children just below junior high school level. It was simple to read, and it boasted more pictures per page than any competing encyclopedia on the market. Another ambitious project was* The Golden Magazine for Boys and Girls *(below), which was one of the most exciting juvenile magazines of its day.*

1964

In 1964, Golden Press introduced Golden Stamp Books as well as softcover Golden Shape Books, a unique line of books with each book die cut into the shape of cover artwork that illustrated an object or animal. This was especially appealing to young preschoolers.

Golden Shape Books proved to be so successful that Western's Racine manufacturing plant was hard pressed to keep up with the demand.

In that year, *The Golden Magazine for Boys and Girls* also made its first appearance. It was an entirely new Golden format: a colorful 64-page monthly packed with stories, games, educational content and other material for children aged 8 to 11. *The Golden Magazine* was mailed directly to homes on a subscription basis and was also sold on newsstands nationwide. This lively juvenile magazine enjoyed a number of successful years under the direction of the same Racine-based creative staff that had earlier produced *The Golden Book Encyclopedia*.

The Golden Magazine proved that Golden Press—and Western, too—was continuing to grow in the mid-1960's. . .not only in product offerings, but also in the methods by which those products reached the reading public.

In December, 1964, Western acquired the 50 percent interest in Golden Press that had been held by Pocket Books. Golden Press was now a wholly-owned subsidiary of Western.

Western had already created and produced Golden Books; now plans were immediately made (and carried out in the ensuing year) to assume the sales and distribution functions that had been handled by Pocket Books. The Odyssey Press, Inc. (the high school and college book publisher purchased by Western in 1961) was named to sell and distribute the flourishing Golden Book adult lines.

About this same time, Western also bought 50 percent ownership in Golden Pleasure Books, Ltd., London, a firm engaged in Golden Book publishing throughout the British Isles. Under the arrangement, Western manufactured some titles and shipped them to England, while other titles were licensed and produced overseas. At the time of the purchase, the top four British Golden Book favorites were *The Children's Bible,* Richard Scarry's *Best Word Book Ever, The Golden Book Encyclopedia* and the *Golden Book Picture Atlas of The World.*

Worldwide, Golden Books were now being produced in 15 foreign languages. And, in 1965, Western initiated still another way to sell its Golden Books when it opened its new direct mail department. From the moment of its first sale, this marketing vehicle attracted the public's attention and experienced resounding success. Key to its early popularity was the reception that greeted the *Wonderful Worlds of Walt Disney,* a four-volume set that sold via direct mail for $15.95. Over 500,000 sets were sold and distributed in the first two and one-half years.

1967

By the time Golden Books celebrated their 25th anniversary in 1967, more than 200 individual Golden Books had sold over one-million copies, and Golden Book sales had surpassed 1.5-billion items. These were obviously fine publishing achievements for a comparatively young company.

Abroad, nearly 300-million Golden Books had appeared in 26 languages: French, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Italian, Dutch, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Finnish, Greek, Hebrew, Chinese, Hindi, Burmese, Persian, Japanese, Afrikaans, Serbo-Croation, Arabic, Turkish, Iranian, Flemish, Tagalog (The Philippines), Tamil (India) and English. In some foreign countries, books such as *The Golden Dictionary* were published not only as a child's first dictionary in one language, but also as a bilingual dictionary as an aid to learning English.

In 1967, Western's earlier takeover of Golden Book sales and distribution went a step farther with the establishment of a Consumer Products Sales Division. (In addition to selling Golden Books, this division was given responsibility to sell all products of the Whitman Publishing and Watkins-Strathmore companies, also subsidiaries of Western.) In the same year, Goldencraft became part of a new Western Educational Publishing Division.

(Above): The cover of the Spring 1967 Golden Press catalog introduced the delightful Playful Puppy, *a new Golden Square Book by Barbara Shook Hazen.*

Shuffling around the Golden Book sales operation certainly didn't deter product development. Despite the flurry of organizational activity, the business of creating new Golden Book ideas, formats and innovations proceeded as usual. Two new books, *Trees of North America* and *Seashells of North America,* joined the highly successful Golden Field Guides that had been pioneered in 1966 with *Birds of North America.*

1969

In 1969, the large Betty Crocker's Cookbook *made its Golden debut with the red cover that would later become so familiar. In time, the book would become a favorite for people "starting out" and for experienced cooks who recognized the value of the book's excellent recipes and hints.*

First published by McGraw-Hill in 1950, the book was totally redesigned into a new format. It was an instant winner with consumers and was the springboard for a succession of specialty cookbooks for people of the 1970's. The following year, *Betty Crocker's Family Dinners in a Hurry* was published. It was the first of several specialty titles that highlighted time-saving recipes for the ever-increasing number of women in the American work force.

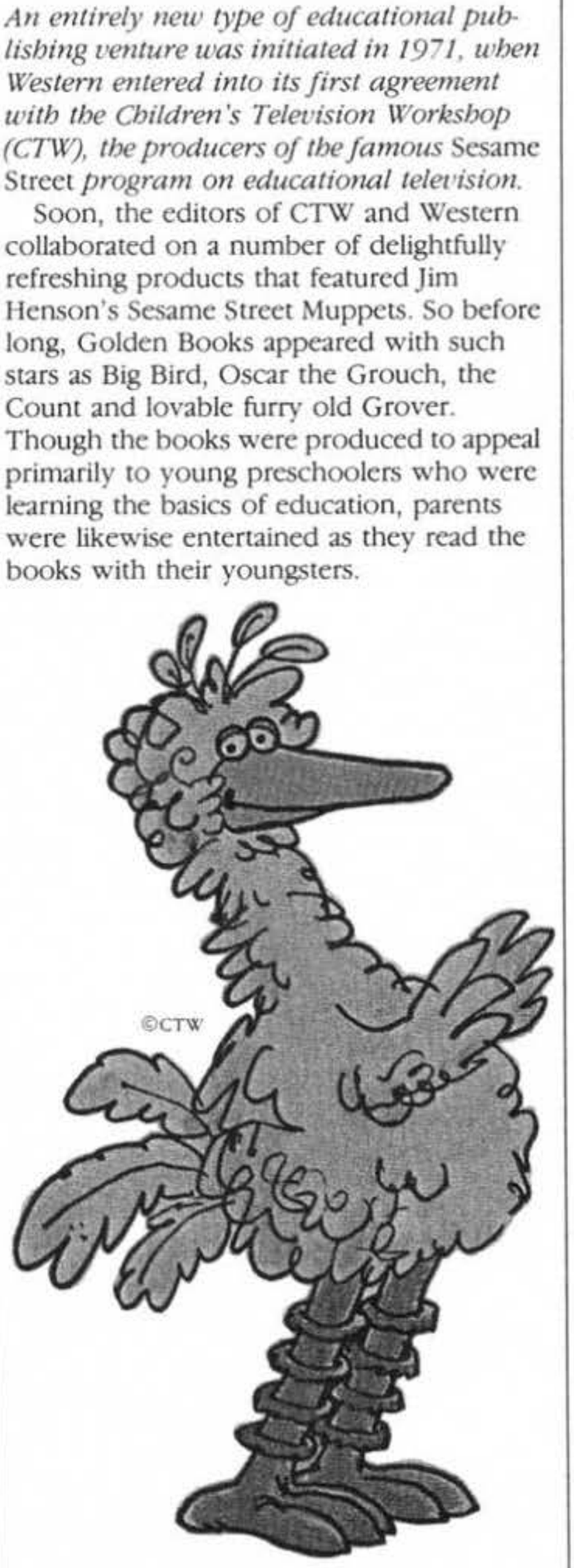
Also in 1969, Western scored a first for itself with a nine-week prime-time television advertising program for Little Golden Books. The program included a six-week campaign centered around three Golden Books by Richard Scarry.

One year later, Golden Books added a new dimension: scent! The Golden Scratch and Sniff Books, introduced in 1970, started their fragrant career with *The Sweet Smell of Christmas,* which offered the scents of apple pie, pine trees and candy cane.

1971

An entirely new type of educational publishing venture was initiated in 1971, when Western entered into its first agreement with the Children's Television Workshop (CTW), the producers of the famous Sesame Street *program on educational television.*

Soon, the editors of CTW and Western collaborated on a number of delightfully refreshing products that featured Jim Henson's Sesame Street Muppets. So before long, Golden Books appeared with such stars as Big Bird, Oscar the Grouch, the Count and lovable furry old Grover. Though the books were produced to appeal primarily to young preschoolers who were learning the basics of education, parents were likewise entertained as they read the books with their youngsters.



Big Bird is a major star on Sesame Street.

In the specialty cookbook area, recipes in the 1971 *Betty Crocker's All-Time Favorites* reflected a new appreciation by consumers for back-to-basics "scratch" cooking. And *Betty Crocker's Good and Easy Cookbook* was revised for the third time, indicating that certain food cravings for the most part don't change. . .but the ways and means of satisfying them certainly do.

For the younger set, Joe Kaufman's *What Makes It Go? What Makes It Work? What Makes It Fly? What Makes It Float?* was published as the first Big Golden Book by this renowned children's author/illustrator who had produced many books in smaller Golden Book formats. A dramatic new series, Golden Read-Together Books, was introduced in cooperation with the Menninger Foundation to help children explore with their parents complex emotions such as fear and anger.

And a new type of honor was awarded Golden Books when three Golden Scratch and Sniff Books were chosen by the Library of Congress to be prepared in braille as part of its annual selection of children's books for the blind.

Golden Books teamed up with Sears, Roebuck & Co. to create *The Wonder of Growing,* an early childhood line of products designed to help toddlers develop motor skills. And Little Golden Book characters, still thriving in the marketplace after nearly 30 years, were licensed to firms manufacturing everything from infant's wear, stuffed toys and crib mobiles to wash cloths, aprons and Halloween costumes.

In 1971 Golden Books also went "on the air" again with another TV promotion. The commercial, "*Bring Home Happiness, Bring Home A Golden Book,*" featured a young boy atop the back of a hippopotamus. The boy is pictured reading a Golden Book on the animal and imagining how he would outfit the beast if he had one for his best friend. Later that fall, the advertising campaign offered a six-foot by four-foot, full color poster of the boy and his mount.

Progressing further into the early 1970's, Golden Book product development proceeded at a fast clip. *Betty Crocker's Do-Ahead Cookbook* was introduced as another culinary aid for people on the go. *The Golden Dictionary* for children, first published in 1943, was revised to include almost 700 additional words and was renamed *The New Golden Dictionary.*

1972

Overall, Golden Books enjoyed a Golden Year in 1972. The prominent national firm, B. Dalton Bookseller, reported that year that 25 Golden Book titles were among its 50 juvenile best-sellers for the month of March. Of those 50, the top five were Golden Books!

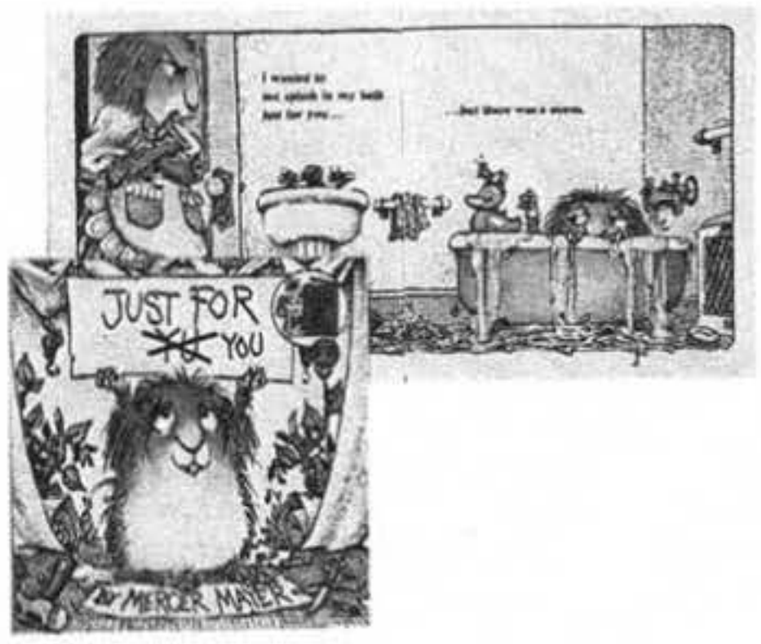
By this time, a decision had been made to transfer more of the Golden Book creative development to Racine. Thus, starting in the early 1970's, Western's Racine office was responsible for the creative development of Little Golden Books and other less expensive Golden Books; the New York office retained responsibility for the comparatively more expensive Golden Books, which included the cookbooks.

The cookbook craze continued in 1973 with *Betty Crocker's Hamburger Cookbook, Betty Crocker's Money-Saving Dinners* and the third edition of *Betty Crocker's Dinner For Two.* The first two titles were answers to increased attention of consumers towards less expensive meat dishes, in-season fresh vegetables and shopping more economically; the latter title revision was sparked by the growing number of smaller families. Another book, *Betty Crocker's Low-Calorie Cookbook,* appealed to the growning number of diet conscious calorie counters.

Also in 1973, Little Lulu joined the Western/Golden family when Western purchased this popular cartoon character. The firm had created Little Lulu products since 1945. However, when the company acquired complete rights to the lovable little girl with the springy hair, red dress and tiny red beanie, it took full advantage of the situation by producing many new products, including Little Golden Books and higher priced Big and Giant Golden Books.

To be sure, creating educational, entertaining reading materials with familiar faces that kids could identify with had long been a trait of Golden Books. This tradition extended itself further in 1974 when marketing managers recommended that more licensed characters appear in Little Golden Books, Golden Shape Books and a number of other products.

In that year Western also introduced a new set of faces that would become familiar when the company signed its first agreement with another beloved children's author/illustrator, Mercer Mayer. His first Golden creation, a Golden Look-Look Book entitled *Just For You,* featured the now



popular Little Critter and paved the way for over 20 succeeding titles, among them Mayer's famous Little Monster books.

Meanwhile, new interest had surfaced in cooking as a form of creative expression. To answer the call for international recipes and sophisticated specials for home entertaining, *Betty Crocker's Cooking With Wine* and *Betty Crocker's Breads* were published in the Golden Book adult line in 1974.

1975

By the end of 1975, Golden Books by Richard Scarry had sold over seven-million copies, Joe Kaufman's How We Are Born, How We Grow, How Our Bodies Work. . . And How We Learn *was a best-seller, Golden Guides (which now included a subject range from birds and fish to kites and casino games) passed 30-million sales and the ever-popular* Betty Crocker's Cookbook *was still holding steady with over one-million copies sold annually.*

Taking advantage of the increasingly creative adult market in the mid-1970's, Golden Books greatly expanded its craft book lines with titles such as *Framing, Winemaking, Tablet Weaving* and *Enameling,* which were additions to the popular Golden Step-By-Step Craft Series.

During the 1976 bicentennial celebration of the U.S., Golden Books featured patriotic juvenile titles such as *Ring for Liberty, Christopher for President* and *About Early America.* For the teen and young adult market, Golden prepared the *Golden Book of America, The American Indian* and *The Golden Book of The American Revolution.*

1977

In 1977, Western launched a full-scale marketing program to offer Little Golden Books and other products in gift box assortments. With these assortments, Little Golden Book manufacture virtually doubled overnight.

The idea of book sets, or gift boxes, also found its way into the marketing of the Trixie Belden teen mystery book series. In 1977, Trixie Belden fiction books were sold for the first time in multi-volume gift boxes; in 1978, young readers were offered a Trixie Belden starter set consisting of the original five mysteries. At this same time, Golden initiated the first intense, diversified marketing program for Trixie. The 14-year-old girl detective now sported a newer, modern look (one of several since her introduction in 1948), and she was the popular idol of many avid readers who anxiously joined the Trixie Belden Mystery Fan Club.

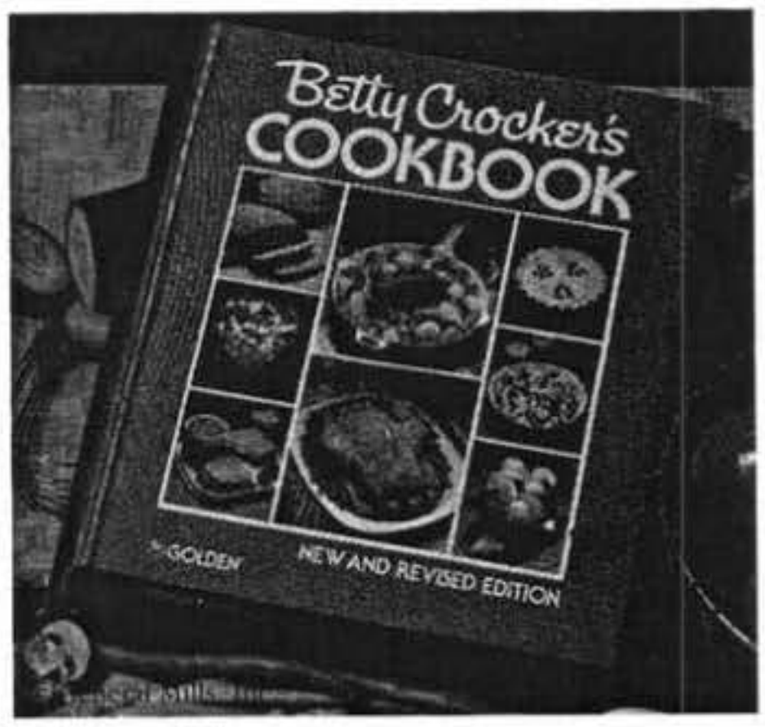
Meanwhile, back in the kitchen, Golden was still keeping pace with our country's ever-changing eating and food-preparation habits. By year's end in 1977, there were two new cookbooks: *Betty Crocker's Microwave Cooking* and *Betty Crocker's Salads.* And, to further reflect the changes in American culinary preferences, plans were soon underway to completely revise the famous *Betty Crocker's Cookbook.*

1978

In 1978, Betty Crocker's Cookbook *became only the sixth title to be inducted into the R.T. French Cookbook Hall of Fame on the campus of Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York. This was another special honor that could be shared by Golden and one of its major creative resources.*

Another event that could be shared in 1978 was the 10th annniversary of *Sesame Street,* which Golden and CTW celebrated with special gift boxes, books and other products.

By the late 1970's, the new Golden Field Guide line numbered five (including *Amphibians of North America* and a revised *Rocks and Minerals*), Trixie Belden had introduced Meg, a new (and younger) detective heroine, the Golden Look-Look Book format had greatly expanded (and now included six new books featuring Mercer Mayer's lovable Little Monster) and Golden had produced a number of photography books especially for the very young.



My Book of the Seasons
Who Says That?
Baby Animals on the farm
Katie the Kitten
THE HAPPY MAN AND HIS DUMP TRUCK
Panda Bear's PAINTBOX

1980

With the advent of the 1980's, the ever-changing American lifestyle again prompted adjustments in Golden Book product development and sales. Betty Crocker's Cooking For One *was compiled to assist the now 15-million one-person households in the country.* Betty Crocker's Cookie Book *was updated to include recipes for extra quick cookies, cookies that travel well, cookies made with granola and cookies that incorporated other modern cookie ideas. And the New York Golden Book creative staff also collaborated with the CTW editors to produce 40 books for the Sesame Street Book Club, an unbelieveably successful direct mail program offered to the public via Western's Racine-based Direct Marketing Division.*

In the early 1980's, the total creative production of Golden Books was once again centered in the New York office. The aim of the New York book publishing group was to continue to excel in both traditional and innovative publishing, providing children with books of high quality and high interest level at affordable prices; to search out new talent among authors and illustrators—as well as new ideas; to explore new technologies and their potential relationship to or usefulness in books or informational materials.

In the adult book area, Golden embarked upon a strong publishing program to continue to publish books with a heavy family orientation in such subject categories as cookery, parenting, crafts, guide books, gardening, family reference, et cetera. Art and design would always be emphasized in the whole Golden Books/Golden Press line.

Soon, Golden introduced more new books: Golden Sturdy Shape Books, hardcover shape books die cut in a shape to match each book's subject; Golden Story-time Books, each a full color, hardcover book with an appealing price; and Golden Wipe-Off Books that children could color in, wipe off, then color again.

From 1974 through 1980, Golden continued to appeal to a wide range of ages. (Opposite page, far left): Mercer Mayer's wonderful monsters and critters pleased children and *adults. (Opposite page, right and bottom): Golden Books were increasingly helpful to adults who wanted to know how to do many things better. (Above): Golden captured the attention of toddlers, preschoolers and grade school children. (Right): Copper and Tod starred in Golden Books based on the Walt Disney Productions family film,* The Fox and the Hound. *And (below) the 1980 Golden Book commercial was nostalgic for parents . . .*and *grandparents!*

In the fall of 1980, Golden Books appeared on TV for the first time since the "Bring Home a Hippo. . ." promotion nine years earlier. The new *"I Grew Up With Golden Books"* commercials were filled with a nostalgia that stirred the memories of parents and reminded them to check their local supermarkets for the Golden Books that they themselves grew up with.

In 1981, to strengthen the list for the very important toddler age bracket, Golden Books created First Little Golden Books for children aged one to three. (Smaller in size than the traditional Little Golden Books read by "older" brothers and sisters, these smaller-sized Golden Books bear the same familiar Little Golden Book gold tape binding. They have simple, read-aloud texts and lively artwork, and their subject matter involves the world of the small child.) For the two-to-five age group, Golden prepared a new line of Scratch and Sniff titles called Little Golden Sniff-It Books. Each of the four new books offered bright, bold pictures and simple stories plus eight fragrance labels.

The Walt Disney Productions movie, *The Fox and the Hound,* inspired a series of successful Golden Book formats as did *Clash of The Titans,* a new film by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

In the early 1980's, other new books and formats included Joe Kaufman's *Wings, Paws, Hoofs And Flippers: A Book About Animals* (Kaufman's fifth Big Golden Book); a popular six-title Sesame Street Read-Aloud book series; and an eight-title Golden Fun-At-Home Workbook series (which presented the market with the first-ever full color workbook for less than a dollar.)

On the adult side, *Betty Crocker's Casserole Cookbook* was designed as a new specialty book that explained how to prepare over 125 one-dish recipes in the oven, atop the range or in the microwave.

1982

This year, Golden Press celebrated the Golden Books 40th anniversary with one of the most attractive arrays of merchandise ever to display the prestigious Golden name.

As spring bloomed, so did a new series called Golden Wacky Families books. The eight titles by Allan Ahlberg tell about the funny (wacky) antics of some very comical characters (including Mr. Biff the Boxer and Mrs. Lather). Their excellent story lines and artwork, glossy hardcover binding and full color pages made them fantastic inflation-fighters at only $2.95 each. Also in the spring, Golden Block Books waddled their way into the hearts (and hands) of little America. (They are square little board books that look just like building blocks, and the four titles in the series are printed on heavy board stock for durability. . .an important consideration for toddlers!)

In 1982, Golden continued to offer Cyndy Szekeres' charming A Child's First Book of Poems, *with its garden mouse (immediately above). Also, it was most natural for Golden to offer a fine mix of new formats (top of page). Thus, Golden celebrated the Golden 40th birthday in style. . .with still* more *special Golden Books!*

Meanwhile, the adult books editorial staff was busy preparing several new books, among them the newest addition to the specialty cookbook line: *Betty Crocker's Barbecue Cookbook,* a mouth-watering smorgasbord of some of the most tempting dishes ever to sizzle in an outdoor pit. New this year, too, was a line of Betty Crocker Picture Cookbooks, smaller in size than their specialty counterparts and concerned with today's culinary interests. *Meatless Main Dishes, Quick-to-Fix Mainstays* and six other titles in the line are all economically priced at $1.98 each. For the video enthusiast, *The Complete Video Warrior: How To Beat The Video Games* by Major Mayhem was published by Golden to help readers improve their scores in Asteroids, Frogger, Pac-Man, Star Castle and 11 other popular video games.

This fall, two new Golden Field Guides, *Reptiles of North America* and *Skyguide: A Field Guide for Amateur Astronomers,* were published for the consumer eager to get closer to nature. . .or farther into space. Additionally, for craft-doers, Golden published *The Great Pantyhose Crafts Book* by Ed and Stevie Baldwin of The Family Workshop. Chosen for the Better Homes and Gardens Book Club, this unique how-to title shows 40 different ways to recycle ruined (with runs) pantyhose into useful, decorative gifts and household items. And, with highlight on Christmas as a special baking time of the year, *Betty Crocker's Christmas Cookbook* was published to make holiday entertaining a little less hectic and probably more meaningful.

As Golden Books have ended their 40th birthday year, Golden Press has delighted children—and parents—with a mixed product bag of old and new.

One of the new product series features the Six Little Possums created by Marci McGill and illustrated by Cyndy Szekeres, who made her successful Golden debut last year with her lovable illustrations in *A Child's First Book of Poems.* Another new product is *A Sesame Street Christmas,* filled with stories, poems, recipes, decorations, presents and other ideas for this special time of the year. And Golden Cloth Books—with safe, durable fabric—are offered now in a new line prepared especially for babies.

One of the "old" products is actually a revised edition of a classic collection, *A Treasury of Little Golden Books,* that is certain to delight thousands of today's youngsters and to rekindle fond memories for adults who recall these all-time favorites. Several stories in the book (first published in 1960) are available only in this collection. Included are original illustrations from the legendary stories about Tootle, the Tawny Scrawny Lion, Scuffy the tugboat. . .and, of course, the Poky Little Puppy.

If Poky and other Golden characters would look back on the past 40 years, they would see two- to three-billion items that have been sold with the Golden name. Today, they would discover that Golden Books find their way out of more than 150,000 retail establishments nationwide and, worldwide, into the homes of consumers in more than 50 countries. Currently, juvenile Golden Books are read and enjoyed in 30 languages, and they continue to fascinate children while they also stir nostalgic thoughts in the minds of parents who remember "growing up with Golden" a generation before. And adult-oriented Golden Books also reach a loyal audience that turns to Golden for that wide range of information, assistance and entertainment that is part of the Golden tradition.

As 1982 comes to an end, perhaps the most appropriate way to conclude the Golden Books story is to simply say, "To be continued. . . ." For, to Poky Little Puppy and Golden Books, being 40 years old is not an end. It's the beginning of a new challenge. After all, still another generation is here.

WESTERN AT YEAR'S END, 1982

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